



*LIFTING HIGH THE CROSS
FOR 200 YEARS*

**St. John's
Lutheran Church**

*Missouri Synod
Conover, North Carolina*

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***LIFTING HIGH THE CROSS
FOR 200 YEARS***

**St. John's
Lutheran Church**

*Missouri Synod
Conover, North Carolina*

**by
MARK SMITH**

*Edited by
Robert C. Carpenter*



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Missouri Synod

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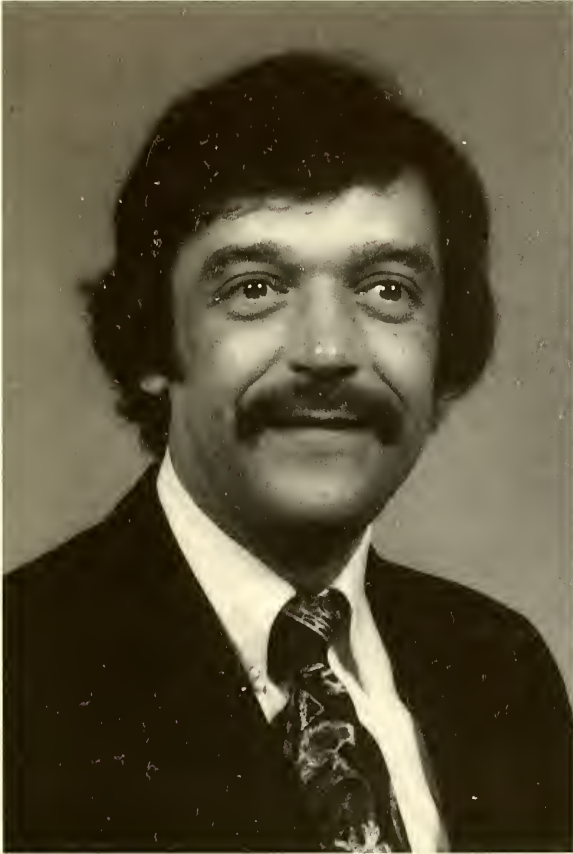
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In Memorial

Mark Smith

September 23, 1950 --- May 27, 1996

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Matthew 5:16



GIFT, PATRICK CASWELL CLONINGER

Mark Smith was a man who let his light shine. My only regret in knowing him was that I hadn't known him all my life. He was my best friend for five short years, until his death on May 26, 1996.

In his professional life, Mark was an architect with a specialty in asbestos removal. A 1972 honor graduate of N. C. State University with a bachelor's degree in environmental Design in Architecture, he was a member of the Kappa Phi National Honor Society. He was the first architect to be licensed for asbestos abatement in the state of North Carolina. His life's work was primarily dedicated to the safe removal of this deadly carcinogen from our schools and colleges across the state. Mark also designed many homes, businesses, and municipal buildings in Catawba County.

Born September 23, 1950, he was the firstborn of Wayne and Peggy Smith. He was baptized at St. John's by Pastor James L. Summers, and was confirmed on May 17, 1964 by Pastor K. H. Reidenbach. While growing up in St. John's, he was a avid member of the Boy Scouts of America. He was an Eagle Scout by age twelve. Mark married twice in his life and was the father of three children; Christopher, Elliott, and Hannah Smith. At the time of his death, he was a member of Concordia Lutheran Church, Conover, N. C. Although St. John's was his home church, Mark also had grown up with strong ties to Concordia. The church was just across the road from his family homeplace, and he had attended Concordia Christian Day School as a child.

Mark loved music, and was himself, an accomplished musician. He played piano, trumpet, French horn, and guitar. He also has several original musical compositions to his credit. He was, indeed, a man of many talents.

On a more personal level, Mark was a sharp-witted humorist. The parodies and ironies of life on this earth rarely escaped him. His infectious laughter and contagious sense of humor always captured an audience. Although the last years of his life were fraught with the intense sorrow of a divorce he never wanted, Mark found the courage to laugh. As his close personal friend, he shared with me his best of times and his worst. I've seen him laugh to keep from crying, and I've seen him laugh until he cried. The gift of humor and the cherished memories of laughter will always be with me. I am forever changed by the privilege of having known him.

As his friend, I also knew his heart. Beneath his wonderful exterior sense of humor was a deeply serious and religious man with his feet firmly planted in his principles. He championed his beliefs, and treasured the history of his roots. He devoted the last three years of his life to the history of St. John's Lutheran Church, and the life and works of David and P. C. Henkel; early "circuit riding" pastors of St. John's. An article about David Henkel will be printed in 1998 by the Concordia Historical Institute.

Mark passed away unexpectedly by an aneurysm while working at his computer. After his death, the Smith family brought his computer to me to save his work. I determined from the time and date stamp on his work processor that Mark had died working on the history of St. John's. His work has been edited and prepared for publication posthumously by Mr. Robert C. Carpenter of Bessemer City, N. C.

St. John's has lost another son. His passing has sorely grieved all who knew and loved him. Along with the Smith family, I, too, will miss the bright light of his presence. Our comfort is knowing there can be no greater testament to any man than that he die in the work of the Lord. Mark has joined the chorus of Angels. His work is his lasting gift, a legacy to us all.

Mark, until we meet again, my beloved friend.

Judy Mitchell

IN TRIBUTE

After the writing of the primary text of the introduction, conclusion, and most of this book, a great lady passed into her heavenly reward.

Amidst great sadness, I was the first to lay a rose on her casket. She changed my diapers. She rocked me when I was sick as a child. Her bountiful kitchen table was mine, when I elected to sit down there. The drop-down ironing board was used as a table for the overflow crowd that sometimes appeared. She knew how to satisfy the appetites of the "thrashers," and the crowds that "got up hay."

She was baptized by her childhood next-door neighbor, Rev. J. M. Smith; she was confirmed into the Lutheran Church at St. John's by George Mennen, Sr.; she was married by Rev. Charles Werberig at St. John's; and her funeral service was delivered at the same site by Rev. Kenneth H. Reidenbach in 1994. She witnessed her parents, many relatives and friends, her oldest son, and her husband of sixty-two years buried in the cemetery. She was a devoted member of St. John's from basket to casket.

Born into an impoverished family, she was educated at the one-room (later two-room) school in Conover, and briefly attended the parochial department at Concordia College. She was one of the early female St. John's Sunday School teachers of this century. She taught me many years later, in about 1963, and I did not appreciate her strictness nor her mandatory attention to the Bible lesson, but I did enjoy the party for her Sunday School Classes, and fondly remember the home-made ice cream and other delights under the walnut tree in her side yard (I got to attend whether it was my class or not).

She loved music -- especially hymns. She could even play (by ear) some of these hymns on her piano, although she probably never had a music lesson in her life. With her encouragement, I spent many Wednesday afternoons at piano lessons, while she visited with her family across the road. Many hours were spent playing that big, black, monstrosity in her den, while she and her husband cheerfully sang along, in what must have been a curious sound to any bystander -- a seven or eight year old child trying to play hymns on the piano, with two adults singing along in a loud voice. As they often shared their house with Concordia Christian Day School teachers, there remains some suspicion that the "boarders" were not always pleased with the recitals they heard. Fortunately, compact tape recorders did not yet exist in the average household. I'm sure that I let her down greatly, when I was never the Church organist at St. John's, and she never heard me play that grand instrument at a regular service. Hopefully, the few years I spent as pianist for Sunday School served as some gratification or consolation.

As children grow to their maturity, they reflect, and gain respect for such things, and for superior people. When she had taught Sunday School for over 50 years, St. John's held a special event to commemorate this extraordinary demonstration of faithfulness to her Church.

In her later years, and as this history progressed, this great woman fell into failing health, although her mind was absolutely incredible on the former times of St. John's, the Town of Conover, and its people in general.

Although not formally educated, she fully understood the magic that it took to reach the minds of children with the Word of God -- and felt it her duty to do so. She could virtually give you an account of every one of the favorite Old Testament stories in the Bible upon the most casual request -- and delighted in the engagement of this type of story with children.

How many of her students encouraged their parents and families to come to church every Sunday because a party was promised to all children who had perfect attendance in Sunday School for a month or two? Her students wanted to come. They loved her, and she loved each one of them.

Pastor Reidenbach knew this woman very well when he presented the consoling message at her funeral. The theme was "She touched me." How many persons were "touched" by the love, the life, the actions, and the Sunday School classes of:

ILA BERTIE SIMMONS SMITH



Thank you, mammaw. I'll always remember the love, the devotion, the self-sacrifice -- and the cookies, freezer-made ice cream, squash pie (I hated squash, but liked the pie), livermush with liver substitutes, and "rice-crispy treats." And so many other things that go beyond the kitchen. So will my children. I always favored the cookies with the raisins in them.

I hope to see you and papaw again in heaven.

With a tear in my eye, I begin a story you never got to read -- one in which you lived through a large portion. You did your part to shape the religious and moral character of me and others.

You helped me so much to write the following.

I hope you are pleased.

Mark Smith

*And if there is a heaven,
And I believe there is.
And if we all should go there,
I believe we'll go as kids.*

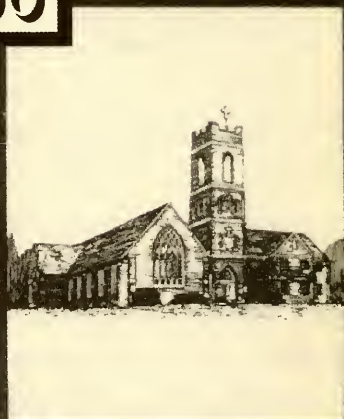
Lewis Grizzard, from "Grandma's Yard."

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200



St. John's Lutheran Church

1798

"The Church on the Hill"

1998

Conover, N. C.

FOREWORD

by
Robert C. Carpenter, editor

In 1994 Mark Smith of Conover, North Carolina purchased a copy of *The History of Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church*. A short time later Mark called me to begin a series of telephone and letter correspondence which directly related to our mutual interests in our church histories.

Mark's initial call was to inform me that he too was researching a history of his church, one whose history in many ways paralleled the history of Bethel. He indicated that my history had been the first he had seen which was straightforward as it dealt with the controversial issues of the Tennessee Synod, the Adam Miller case, creation of the Tennessee Synod Reorganized, and the entry of the Ohio Synod into North Carolina.

As the months and years wore on, our conversations and letters increased. Our mutual interest in Rev. David Henkel and the issues surrounding the creation of the Tennessee Synod caused us to contemplate writing first an historical article for a scholarly journal and then the possible publication of a biography of David Henkel. We exchanged drafts, ideas, re-writes, and analyzed newly discovered Henkel letters, mostly in German.

Mark did not live to learn that our article on David Henkel, entitled "David Henkel and the Genesis of American Lutheran Confessionalism", had been accepted for publication in the *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*. This article is scheduled to be printed during this year 1998, the bicentennial year of St. John's Lutheran Church.

After Mark died, I contacted his parents about what would become of his research and his work. I offered to complete Mark's book as editor. I knew how hard he had worked, had seen the quality of his research and writing, and also knew that others wanted to see the finished product. Mark's parents, Wayne and Peggy Smith, graciously agreed for me to complete the book. They furnished me with salvaged materials, books, manuscripts, and computer files. With these materials I labored to complete Mark Smith's labor of Christian love.

It is impossible for me to acknowledge all who have contributed to this book. As I have worked through Mark's materials, I still cannot determine all who assisted his research. Mark has long lists of people with whom he wrote and talked history. To all who helped Mark Smith research, discover sources, and discuss history, I wish to say thank you for your invaluable service to a history which will make you and Mark very proud.

A partial list of persons for whom I have seen documentation of their help to Mark would include: Gwen Bost Sherrill, who helped Mark immensely; Ann W. McAllister; Dr. Raymond Bost and Dr. R. H. Baur; John H. Smith of Newton; Mrs. Sara Mummert, an assistant at A. R. Wentz Library in Gettysburg who sent Mark countless Henkel documents and letters; Michael Plunkett, Director of Special Collections at the Alderman Library at the University of Virginia, who also sent Mark numerous letters and papers; Roy E. A. Ledbetter, Reference and Research at the Concordia Historical Institute in St. Louis, who sent Mark church periodical microfilm; Nancy J. Miller at the Lutheran Archives Center in Philadelphia; Rebecca A. Ebert, Archives Librarian, at The Handley Library at Winchester, Virginia. Countless others assisted his research, especially friends and neighbors.

I am most pleased to express my appreciation to Wayne and Peggy Smith, who supported my efforts with kind words and assistance and without whose support this book would not be possible. I thank Anne W. McAllister of Hickory who proof-read the book to help locate errors prior to publication. To Derick Hartshorn, I express my appreciation for indexing this book for free in memory of Mark Smith. Derick also assisted me with computer issues, standardizing the text and footnotes. To my family, my wife Sue, my children Michael, Marcus, and Candace, I thank them for their support and for their understanding time lost because of my work on this project. To the Historical Committee of St. John's I say thank you for your leadership in supporting this magnificent publication. This book will make you and future generations very proud.

Finally, to Mark Smith whose intellect, resourcefulness, and tenacity created this history, I do

not know of a better church history and suggest that it surpasses many synod and regional histories. Its strengths lie in Mark's intense and thorough research. His ability to tackle difficult issues and controversial events with a straightforward approach for accuracy makes the rich history of this church and its people come alive. His many other talents are illustrated on a previous page which is a copy of Mark's drawings of the four church buildings of St. John's. He truly excelled in everything he did. I thank Mark Smith for the many letters, phone calls, and the intellectual stimulation. We have all benefited from his work.

Lifting High the Cross For 200 Years is written with Bible verses at the beginning and end of each chapter. Mark used different fonts, bold and italics to dress up the book. Page numbers and chapter titles are at the bottom of each page. Footnotes are also located at the bottom of each page. I believe the book is very user-friendly. Each chapter has a chapter number and title. Pictures are located among the chapters and pastors' pictures are located at the end of the book. The Bibliography and Index are located on the final pages.

My task as editor was to standardize the chapters which Mark had written independently of each other. I compared footnotes, text, and fonts. I tried to create a book which had a consistency for all its footnotes, its text, and its headings. I found that some chapters had no Bible passages for which I added passages. I discovered that some footnotes were incomplete and tried to make them complete. I compiled a Bibliography from Mark's original bibliography and added sources by looking through his footnotes. I know that I have left out some of his sources. For these omissions I apologize.

I tried very hard to edit only and to let Mark's words speak. I only changed text when details needed adding or when the passage appeared ambiguous. I added some information which became available after Mark's death. I know he would want the most up-to-date information in his text. I made comments in the footnotes and used my initials -- RCC -- to indicate my opinion. Mark had completed the book through Chapter 17. Wayne and Peggy Smith got others to complete the most recent history of St. John's and Chapters 18, 19, 20, and 21 were added. I left these chapters as they were sent to me and therefore there is inconsistency in format between these last chapters and the main portion of the book.

I offer this book to you for your enjoyment. It is the history of St. John's Lutheran Church, Conover, NC. But it is much more. It is also the history of Lutheranism in North Carolina, the Southeast, and the United States. It is the story of early Germans settling and living west of the Catawba River. It is the history of ordinary people and of extraordinary people. Some were pastors and some were lay. Their story was the story of faith in Jesus Christ, as they **lifted high the cross of Christ for 200 years.**

INTRODUCTION

And these things we write unto you, that your joy may be full. 1 John 14

There are a few of the congregations in North Carolina about which considerable volumes might be written. Such especially are St. Paul's, St. John's, Bethel [Gaston Co.], and Miller's. . . . but we hope some local historian will enrich the archives of our American Lutheran Church by collecting the data of these Churches, some of them a hundred years old and more.

Such was the language of Rev. R. E. Golladay, B. D., in his pamphlet, *History of Concordia District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States*, published in 1903. This quote was describing the four oldest North Carolina congregations who joined the Joint Synod of Ohio. Of these churches, only Bethel Lutheran Church, Gaston County, has complied with his request prior to this writing. The other three are from Catawba County and have from time to time printed historical sketches only. Now, hopefully the name of St. John's can be reduced from Golladay's "wish list," and much of the early history of St. Paul's and Miller's is also preserved, as the three Catawba County churches were served by many of the same pastors until the 1880's.

The St. John's Church story is interesting -- to make the most absolutely preposterous understatement contained within these book covers.

It's hard to believe that this Church was founded about twenty years after the Province of North Carolina became the State of North Carolina in the United States of America. In all likelihood, George Washington was president when St. John's congregations were organized. John Adams was President when the first land purchase was made. The Church existed over forty years before there was a place named Catawba County, over fifty years before a railroad, and nearly eighty years before there was a town named Conover. The date on the original deed places the congregation over five years older than the oldest Lutheran Synod in North Carolina, thirty years older than the state's first German Reformed Classis, and about fifty years older than the Lutheran Missouri Synod. Not only is St. John's quite old, a great heritage rests at the "Church on the Hill," and it deserves to be remembered.

If you were told that St. John's had the largest church building for the German-speaking settlers west of the Catawba River in North Carolina around the year 1800, would you believe it? If you were told that St. John's can boast the largest-known confirmation class ever held in an early German-descent Church in the local area, would you believe it? If you were to be apprised as to a later confirmation class of over 40 participants, would this seem likely to you? If someone told you that the baptized membership of St. John's was well over 600 souls before the year 1820, what would you think of that person's mental capacities? Would you believe that a Negro member of St. John's aspired to preach the Gospel in the year 1865? If you knew that the formation of the only remaining Lutheran college in North Carolina actually had its roots on the hilltop three miles north of Conover, what would you think? If a rumor surfaced that St. John's may have been the most prominent Lutheran/German Reformed Church of the area in its formative days, and possibly, the largest in the State of North Carolina, would you believe it? Do you think it possible that the third oldest Lutheran Synod in North America held its meeting at St. John's in 1811? Would you believe that St. John's Church is the oldest North Carolina church in the Missouri Synod? And the list of this type of questions could go on for pages.

Now that your attention has been gained . . . Most current members would easily answer "NO" to each question. However, every question above might be truthfully answered "YES"!

The St. John's story is one of our hardy ancestors, who settled into the area now known as Catawba County, to escape the religious and civil persecutions of their homeland, and to find a better way of life. It is the story of church trials and triumphs, church chaos and calm, church unionism and separation, and church growth and division.

From a true historical perspective, it is the story of war and peace, formation of a country, formation of a state, formation of a county, and formation of a town. It is the story of family joy and happiness, during births, baptisms, confirmations, and marriages. But it is also that of hardships, epidemics, wars, and death.

St. John's is the story of its pastors, who have provided the means of grace to the souls of its congregations for two centuries. It is also the story of pastors who are human beings, with differences in personal or doctrinal

beliefs. However tempting it may be, it is often too easy to portray the history of a church through its pastorate. This temptation was resisted as was possible; unfortunately, many of the available sources of information were written by or about St. John's pastors. Very few words seem to exist about the early people or the congregations themselves, as the German-speaking settlers seemed more concerned about making history than preserving it in the written word (in the English language).

St. John's is the story of Christian education, Sunday School, Bible School, church picnics, sunrise services, and many other organizations, events, and milestones.

St. John's is the story of the tragedy of a fire, but more importantly, the God-given strength and determination of the people to demonstrate to themselves and their community the faith and convictions of their forefathers.

The true history of a church belongs to the people -- to the families that founded, maintained, "grew up", and "lived" in that church. "Where there are two or three of you gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of you." Particularly in the early records, name-dropping was preferred as often as possible, so that current members and relations may realize the whereabouts of their ancestors.

The Bible offers us a perfect example in writing a history book about the people. Although it gives us the "law" and the "gospel", it also provides an impeccable history of the Jewish people, including family history. In Genesis 5, there are listed ten "begats" between Adam and Noah's son, Shem. Nine "begats" later came Abram, father of Israel. The New Testament begins with the continuation of the Hebrew genealogy, including forty-one more "begats". "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations." [Matthew 1: 17] The number of generations from Adam to Christ total sixty. The number of "begats" at St. John's now totals from about eight to ten.

The writing of a history should have a useful purpose. The experiences gained at a former time should be remembered and considered later. The child who touches the hot stove and feels the uncomfortable sensation will never intentionally touch it again in its lifetime. Positive experiences are remembered with equal clarity. However, the lifetime of a Church spans many generations of human lifetimes, so the prosperous periods of the church, and the factors that caused them, can be forgotten by later generations. Possibly of greater importance, without a little reflection on the past, the church's "hot stove" reflex may require re-learning every third or fourth human generation.

Several occurrences were uncovered during the first century of St. John's, which are not very appealing, based on the benefit of over a century's hind-sight. Much introspection was given to each incident. Past historians have, more often than not, chosen to ignore them, barely touched on them, or dressed their language with glamour or euphemism. Sometimes, excuses were given for neglecting them, such as "not to open afresh those wounds." Quite often, these historians were writing from an obviously biased perspective, and the referenced incidents demonstrated deficiencies to their writing's purpose. Should this approach have been taken in a history of St. John's? Maybe so. But, then, the "hot stove" experiences of the Church's youth could be forgotten as it matures.

Again, the Bible offers a perfect model to appease the conscience of a church history writer. In plain language, it recounts the fall from grace of Adam and Eve, the murder of Abel, the doubt of Moses that prevented his entry into the promised land, the sins of the flesh of King David, the misgivings of Jonah, the denial of Peter, the betrayal of Judas, wars where thousands of men were slaughtered in a single day, the evils of Sodom and Gomorrah, etc., etc., etc..

This divinely-inspired example dictates that histories should relate problems and failures with equal attention and candor as the achievements and glory. It is only with this approach that the reader is reminded that the early church was not completely filled with love, harmony, unity, fidelity, and prosperity, any more than that of the persons or families in its membership. These events often vividly demonstrate many of the tensions and temptations that tested the faiths of our ancestors. As the Church belongs to God, the history of St. John's occurred within his omniscient plan; therefore, apologies for reciting some of the less desirable details are not forthcoming. And admittedly, a few of these stories were the most intriguing part of the research, and soon became the most interesting to relate.

As many notes and reference materials began to accumulate, the possibility of a reasonably complete history for St. John's bicentennial celebration became more plausible. But alas, church records from the early era were not known to exist. In fact, no church records or ledgers could be located until the year of 1868. This forced the improbability of reconstruction of a church history from records, documents, and writings that were obtained from

outside sources. Fortunately, the granite in the well-maintained cemetery offered considerable insight into the first century, as its testimony assisted greatly in matching up St. John's names and dates to the outside sources.

One problem surfaced very quickly when examining early records for applicability to St. John's -- a language barrier. The founders of St. John's spoke German!! And they wrote in a German script, that is unrecognizable today. Many documents, publications, tombstones, and other possible references were written in German, as this was the commonly-used language at St. John's until about 1810 to 1820. Often, translations were available, but sometimes they were not. Rather than hire a translator or learn German in my middle-ages, I chose to learn the German cursive somewhat, and get poor translations via the computer. This method often allowed reasonable paraphrases.

It seemed more interesting to include the German spellings for certain words and names as they appeared, as this emphasizes the ancestral and linguistic "roots" of St. John's, and provides some clues as to when the community's transition to the English language occurred.

It should be duly noted, that this history was definitely written from the perspective of the Missouri Synod Lutheran congregation presently in existence at St. John's. St. John's facilities served two or three congregations for the first century and one half. Some attention was paid to the existence of the German Reformers during the formative years, and to the Tennessee Synod Re-organized (later Ohio Synod) affiliation, as they were integral ingredients in the recipe resulting in today's Lutheran congregation, as well as several surrounding churches. However, there was not the serious attempt to accumulate complete documentation on these parts of the St. John's family, as many of the individual families have either been absorbed into the remaining Lutheran congregation, have regretfully moved elsewhere, or have developed histories of their own that hopefully realize their passage through St. John's.

Certain time periods have caused considerable consternation during research, as the information either is not available, or simply could not be located. Specifically, Daniel Moser and Adam Miller, Jr. were two nineteenth century pastors who proved particularly elusive -- not that reasonable information did not exist about them, but that little specific information could be found as to their direct relationships with the families of St. John's. A second blurred period is that of the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized congregation that worshipped at St. John's from about 1845 until 1883. Perhaps future St. John's enthusiasts, armed with additional information, can fill in these gaps. Should further information surface, perhaps a supplement can be offered.

Fortunately, certain early periods of St. John's can be reproduced with amazing accuracy, as outside sources of information have been carefully maintained. The periods of 1814-1831 and 1845-1900 are fairly well documented by sources outside the Church. Enough glimpses into the period prior to 1814 were discovered to begin the story, and a few of these early records are astonishing.

Brief histories of St. John's have been written by Reverend Carroll Orestes Smith, who presented his first account at the centennial celebration, held in May 1899. He later read the history of St. John's at its 125th and 150th celebrations, at the dedication of the current church building, and several other times. Fortunately, he wrote down his thoughts, and on many occasions, they were published for our education and enlightenment today.

In many cases, his accounts are the only known record of certain events, due to the loss of many church records. Reverend Kenneth H. Reidenbach has supplemented these efforts at various anniversary celebrations in the last twenty-five years or so. Special thanks go to these two pastors for preserving portions of the past, which could have otherwise possibly been lost forever.

During the course of this research, the deepest respect was gained for our forefathers, who fought for their religious freedoms, and suffered through the trials and tragedies that caused St. John's to come into existence and to be sustained for two centuries. Hopefully, similar emotions are transmitted within these pages.

Many thanks must go to persons who assisted in obtaining information or in other preparations for this endeavor. Several persons stand forth as providing great assistance in gathering elusive information. Mrs. Gwendolyn B. Sherrill, of Conover, encouraged the effort and continuously sent me a stream of church-related articles and St. John's family-related information. If I got stumped on an individual or family, she usually had the answer or knew where to find it. Mr. Robert C. Carpenter, of Bessener City, provided tremendous assistance in the gathering of information on the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod Re-Organized, for which little or no comprehensive history has been written, and whose congregation has not existed for several decades. We also shared much information relative to the Rev. David Henkel. The family of Rev. C. O. Smith, former president of Concordia College, has been most gracious in allowing me to copy many items relative to Concordia College and St. John's. Mrs. Ann Williams McAllister, of Hickory, gave incredible assistance and advice into the early years. Various others have provided church and family information, without which much would have remained untold.

The libraries that were visited consisted of no small number. Cooperation from local libraries was outstanding, including Catawba County Library, Elbert Ivey Library, and Lenoir-Rhyne Library. Local libraries in surrounding counties were also searched for esoteric information, and the libraries in Davie County, Davidson County, and Old Salem provided a few surprises.

Many College and University Libraries were consulted, and there could have been no more kind treatment and reasonable access to rare pamphlets and original documents than the Perkins Library at Duke University. It was at Duke that many, many of the incredible nineteenth century facts and myths became verifiable historical reality at St. John's. Mr. Erwin and his excellent staff made my visits there most memorable. Also, Abdel Ross Wentz Library at Lutheran Theological Seminary, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, houses a great number of the original Henkel family papers, and has been most cooperative. The University of Virginia also was of great assistance. The various Henkel collections there provide a most vivid account of the early history of the church and these records have not been extensively used by historians previous to this history.

Neighboring churches have helped beyond measure, as often, the records of one early church are similar to that of another served by the same pastor. Church archives that provided much information and insight into this effort include Concordia Lutheran, Conover; St. Peter's Lutheran, Catawba County; St. Mark's Lutheran, Claremont; St. Paul's Lutheran, Hickory; Trinity United Church of Christ, Conover; and many others. No church was unwilling to show me their earliest records, and most were willing to make copies or allow me to do so, if it would assist this effort.

The results of these efforts are finally in your hands. May they be dedicated to the glory of God, to the memory of our Christian heritage, and in honor of those who maintain it, so that we may bequeath the faith of our fathers to the hearts and souls of our children.

Mark Smith

Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. Deuteronomy 32:7.

THE SETTLEMENT

And the Egyptians evil entreated us, and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage: And when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labor, and our oppression. Deuteronomy 26:6-7.

The first known German to set foot upon the soil of North Carolina was Doctor John Lederer. Lederer had been commissioned by Sir William Berkeley, Governor of the Colony of Virginia, to make expeditions to the west and south in an effort to find a pass through the mountains of Virginia, and to gather information about Carolina. Lederer made three different expeditions in 1670. The Hamburg native, accompanied by one Major Harris with some twenty men and five Indians, began his southern trek in May 1670. Lederer and Major Harris soon had a disagreement, and Lederer relentlessly proceeded on his own, with an Indian guide. His route through North Carolina cannot be accurately determined, but he visited the Sara Indians on the Yadkin River and terminated his mission at "Usherry," a Catawba Indian Settlement. It is doubtful, based on his maps, that he ever crossed the Catawba River. When he finally arrived back in Virginia after a two month absence, he had fallen into disfavor with Governor Berkeley. Major Harris had represented to the people "that the public taxes of that year had all been expended in his wanderings." With this embarrassment, Lederer went to Maryland, where the provincial secretary Sir William Talbot took note of his accomplishments. Lederer's journal was translated from Latin into English and was published.¹ The story of the Carolinas was now in print, and it was a matter of time before the word reached the German and Swiss settlers in Pennsylvania.

About the same time, William Penn was promoting German immigration to Pennsylvania, by taking trips to Germany in 1671 and 1677. The early German-speaking immigrants to Pennsylvania were mostly Swiss Mennonites with a sprinkling of other religious denominations, and few Lutherans or German Reformeds. In about 1700, another group of German "hermits" appeared, with a Lutheran by the name of Daniel Falckner, who later became a minister.²

The ancestry of many settlers in the area that later became Catawba County, North Carolina, can be found in the Rhine Valley in Germany, which was known as the Rhenish Palatinate. Other early German-speaking settlers' origins are in Switzerland, some are in France, and a few are possibly true "Dutch" from the Netherlands.³

In the century following the Protestant Reformation of 1517, much of the Palatinate population shed Catholicism and became Protestant. When Protestant Henry IV became King of France, he formed the cities of La Rochelle and Nantes as places of refuge for persecuted Protestants. When his son, Louis XIII, came to power, many French Protestants were driven out of La Rochelle, and out of the country of France completely. They joined their religious counterparts in the Palatinate region, where protection was afforded. Louis XIII then fought the

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1. Gottfried Delmann Bernheim, *History of the German Settlements and the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina*, (Philadelphia, 1872; repr. Spartanburg, SC, 1957) 50-56. Klaus Wust, *The Virginia Germans*, (Charlottesville, VA: The University Press of Virginia, 1969; repr. 1989) 12-13. Lederer's Journal translation is entitled *The Discoveries of Jahn Lederer in the Several Marches from Virginia to the West of Carolina and Other Parts of the Continent* (London: 1672). It has been republished with annotation by William P. Cumming in *Discoveries of Jahn Lederer with Unpublished Letters by and about Lederer to Governor Jahn Winthrop, Jr.* (Charlottesville, VA), copy at Perkins Library, Duke University.
 2. Henry Eyster Jacobs, *A History of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States*, Second Edition, (New York, 1893), pp. 110-111. Hereinafter referenced Jacobs. There are many excellent accounts of the religious persecution of Europeans during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in this and other books. Find any source which refers to the "Thirty Years War." Many gruesome tales are told.
 3. All German-speaking people, throughout this book, will be named as "German," as they spoke German, but may have emigrated from several German-speaking countries in Europe. Nowhere will the term "Dutch" be used, except for the possible case of a proven Dutchman from Holland, or in direct quotations.

Prince of the Palatinate, because he accepted these exiled Huguenots. This war raged from 1618 to 1648, and is commonly known as the "Thirty Years War." When the next generation came to power, Louis XIV renewed attacks on Protestant Huguenots, who again fled France for the Palatinate region after 1685. Like his predecessor, he then turned his belligerent efforts to the region across the border, and caused much cruel destruction to the Palatinate.

Louis XIV totally burned and destroyed nineteen cities, and gave a three day ultimatum to leave the country. A contemporary historian recounts this sad period:

The French commander announced to near a half million human beings that he granted them three days to get out of the Palatinate. Even the roads and fields, which then lay deep in snow, were blackened by innumerable multitudes of men, women and children flying from their homes. Many died of cold and hunger, but enough survived to fill the streets of all the cities of Europe with refugees who had been thriving farmers and shopkeepers. The work of destruction began. The flames went up from every market place, every hamlet, every parish church, every country-seat within the devoted provinces. The corn fields were plowed up; the orchards were hewn down. Not a vine, not an almond tree was to be seen on the sunny hills round what had once been Heidelberg. No respect was shown to palaces, to temples, to monasteries, to infirmaries, to beautiful works of art, to monuments of the illustrious dead! The far-famed castle of the Elector Palatinate was turned into a heap of ruins. The hospital was sacked. The provisions, the medicines, the pallets on which the sick lay, were destroyed. The very stones on which Mannheim was built, were flung into the Rhine! The magnificent Cathedral of Spire [Speyer] perished, and with it the marble sepulchre of eight Caesars. The coffins were broken open: the ashes scattered to the wind. Treves, with its fair bridges, its Roman baths and amphitheatres, its venerable churches, convents and colleges were doomed to the same fate, but Louis XIV was stopped by the execrations of all the neighboring nations. Louis XIV relented, and Treves was spared! This occurred in 1689.⁴

Publications boasted the "promised land" of the New Land [*Neulande*], including the Carolinas. By about 1708, thousands of refugees fled Germany, many to England, where they were received with the benevolence of Queen Anne, cousin of the Count Palatinate. She provided tents and made a formidable effort to accommodate them. Soon thereafter, the Carolina Company shipped about seven hundred to the Carolinas, and the town of New Bern was founded. An Indian massacre virtually wiped out this settlement in about 1711. Other refugees sailed to New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. When New York became resistive, many families migrated to the more-receptive Pennsylvania.⁵

In 1731, another group of German Protestants was stripped of land ownership in their homeland, with winter coming on, due to their religious beliefs. Those who owned no land were forced to leave their homes in Salzburg within three days, with land-owners being allowed from one to three months. As they marched through various cities and towns on their way to Prussia or other foreign countries, the familiar sound rang out:

Take they then our life,
Goods, fame, child, and wife;
When their worst is done,
They yet have nothing won,
The kingdom ours remaineth.⁶

Words from the first of Martin Luther's hymns, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God," were sung by these brave souls as they marched. A contemporary writer describes this exodus:

The beginning occurred at the end of the year 1731, in the severe winter. Memmingen, Weilheim, Kaufbeuren, Augsburg, Kempten, Ulm, were the first evangelical places which they entered. In the following year they went mostly through Swabia, Franconia, Thuringia, Saxony, and Brandenburg. They were everywhere received most cordially, and treated most generously. In the cities they were met by the magistrates, the clergy, the schools, and the entire body of citizens. They were received by the preachers with consolatory and edifying discourses as they walked two by two through the cities, or, where time allowed, they were conducted to the churches amidst the ringing of all the bells and with appropriate music. What occurred in the cities was repeated in the villages. The emigrants sang with joyful voice as they entered and as they departed. Their strange accent rendered their strains all the more pathetic, so that many a heart was touched and opened to bestow kind gifts.⁷

4. Elizabeth Hoyle Rucker, *The Genealogy of Peiter Heyl and His Descendants, 1100-1936*, (Shelby: 1938) 18-21.

5. Jacobs, pp. 111-115. Rucker, p. 21. Wentz, Abdel Ross, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America*, (Philadelphia: 1955), pp. 19-20, hereafter cited Wentz.

6. Jacobs, p. 154.

7. *Ibid*, p. 153-154, from "A. H. E." (N. T.) IX (1783):45. The original source was not located.

A living picture was presented of the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt. There were venerable men, with white locks, bent backs, and with trembling limbs, among others in the prime of life and still others in the bloom of youth; infirm old women, and alongside of them strong and active wives, young maidens, and fair girls; tender children following their fathers or led by the hand with quick steps, or infants resting in their mothers' arms, or hanging about their fathers' necks; wagons carrying baggage, and most aged, the sick, and the babes who had but lately seen the light. We would naturally expect that these homeless ones would fill the country through which they would pass with tears and lamentations; but while the cheeks of many who received them were moistened, and deep sighs showed their sympathy, the bands of exiles went forth in triumph, and the thought of their affliction was relieved by their trust in God, that, even on a foreign soil, and under another heaven, and in a land which they had not seen with their eyes, and in a way as yet entirely unknown, they would find an abiding-place and a peaceful dwelling.⁸

The European community assisted these refugees. The Protestant organizations gathered funds and arranged for transportation to various locations, often in the *Neulande*, including the areas around Charleston and Savannah.⁹ Protestant persecution in Europe was, in a large part, responsible for the beginnings of Germanic migration to America. Word of mouth, and relative prosperity of the New World immigrants, attracted others throughout most of the eighteenth century.

Pennsylvania, which had openly invited this immigration earlier, became rapidly populated by Germans. Many became land owners through either purchase or land grants from the agents of William Penn. By the 1740s and 1750s, the migration increased significantly. The forces of supply and demand caused the cost of land to rise to the point that many immigrants were forced to move to the frontier areas to gain the freedoms and opportunities they so dearly sought.

Hugh Williamson, in his 1812 "History of North Carolina," offers a concise description of the reasons for the southward and westward migration from Pennsylvania:

Men, who were thus degraded [referring to economic, religious, and individual intolerance] and vexed by incapacities and burdens, migrated in thousands to Pennsylvania, a province in which the principles of civil and religious liberty and their full operation [were tolerated]; but land could not be obtained in Pennsylvania without much difficulty, for the proprietors of that province purchased the soil by small parcels from the natives, and those lands were soon taken up. Lands were to be obtained on moderate term in Virginia; but the administration of that province was in a state of constant hostility with religious liberty. Lord Carteret's land in Carolina, where the soil was cheap, presented a tempting residence to the people of every denomination.¹⁰

And the southern migration from Pennsylvania, northern Maryland, Virginia, and New Jersey began. Since most of these settlers arrived by way of Pennsylvania, the methods of settlement in this area were surely similar.

. . . they sought out the heavily timbered soil, laboriously cleared it, and then raised the abundant crops that only such soil could produce. . . . Their rapid improvement in economic condition forms "such a monument of human industry and economy as has seldom been contemplated in any age or country."¹¹

After his cattle and crops were in order, the early German settler re-directed his efforts.

He converted his temporary log house into a more commodious and permanent home. He quarried his own stone, sawed and seasoned his own lumber, and with his own hands and the help of his family, built his dwelling after the pattern of the home he had left in the Palatinate or in Wurttemberg. . . . The inside of the house was marked by plainness rather than elegance.¹²

Historian Bernheim eloquently described the early German settlers.

These German settlers were all industrious, economical, and thrifty farmers, not afraid nor ashamed of hard labor, and were soon blessed with an abundance of everything which the fertile soil and temperate climate of that portion of North Carolina could furnish them. As they were all agriculturists, they generally avoided settling themselves in towns; uninformed in the ways of the world, ignorant of the English language, and unacquainted with the shrewdness necessary for merchandising, yet well informed in their own language and well read in their Bibles and other devotional German books, they remained at their own country homes, and enriched themselves with the productions of the soil.¹³

8. *Ibid*, from same original source, pp. 45-47.

9. *Ibid*, pp. 159-162.

10. Hugh Williamson, *The History of North Carolina*, Vol. II, (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, 1812; Spartanburg: The Reprint Company, 1973), p. 71.

11. Wentz, p. 30, partially cited from a book by Dr. Benjamin Rush.

12. *Ibid*, pp. 30-31.

13. Bernheim, pp. 153-154.

Family research by Anne W. McAllister indicates that Heinrich Weidner was trapping in North Carolina as early as 1738. Royal Governor Gabriel Johnston granted him a land patent on September 29, 1750, for 1000 acres of land on the west side of the South Fork of the "Catapa" river, and a year later, 500 additional acres on both sides of the same river. He later obtained additional land in this manner.¹⁴ The early settlement spread up the South Fork and by 1751, Germans were obtaining land on Clarks Creek. About that same time, settlement began on what later became known as Lyle's Creek and the area to the north.

In a 1753 letter from Matthew Rowan to the North Carolina Lords of the Board of Trade, he described his visit to Anson, Orange, and Rowan (including later Catawba) County areas, and estimated the growth from less than one hundred fighting men in 1746 to "at least three thousand, for the most part Irish Protestants and Germans and dayley [sic] increasing." A German and Swiss settlement of twenty-two families, "who are all an industrious people," was described living on the North Carolina frontiers by Royal Governor Arthur Dobbs in 1755. Dobbs also described the dangers and a land ownership dilemma:

... as the climate and Land is so good, and well watered, but no poor man dare venture to take uplands upon an exposed Frontier to the merciless Indians, and none but rich Planters and German Families will remove from the Northern Colonies with a view of enlarging their Properties, and having a large scope of land to divide among their children, so that 640 Acres will not be sufficient for these Migrants, and they have no way to obtain larger Grants, than to take 2 or 3 such patents. . . .15

Nearly all of the early German settlers west of the Catawba were from the Pennsylvania/Maryland migration, which began in earnest in the 1750s, to be continued with some interruption until well after the Revolutionary War. Their pathway was primarily down the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, across the mountains to Salisbury, and finally into the western Piedmont. As the eastern portion of today's Catawba County was being settled by English and a few Scots-Irish, the central, western, and northern portions became inhabited by the "Pennsylvania Dutch," which was the commonly used anglicized corruption of the word "Deutsch," meaning "German." There was also a lesser western migration from the settlements in Orange, Anson, and Rowan, and some movement from the German settlements in South Carolina.

Other German-speaking settlers, the Moravians, discovered similar terrain to the east of the Yadkin River, and founded a settlement in current Forsyth and Stokes Counties. This migration occurred due to an exploratory trip by Bishop Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg. Finally, in 1753, a large tract of land was purchased from Lord Granville, and the tract was named "Wachovia." Much land around the Catawba River was surveyed during the Moravian expedition, and was not released for several years.¹⁶

Other religious denominations followed their Moravian neighbors to Wachovia and neighboring settlements. By the early 1760s, the "United Brethren," or the Anabaptist group known as Dunkers, acquired land from Lord Granville along the Yadkin River near Wachovia.¹⁷

Current research suggests that many of the earliest Germans settling west of the Catawba River were sectarians --Mennonite, Dunker, Seventh Day Baptist, and New Mooner. Others were Lutheran and German Reformed. The profile of these early settlers exposes a second generation German or one who had lived for

14. Margaret M. Hofmann, *Colony of North Carolina, 1735-1764, Abstracts of Land Patents*, Vol. 1. (Weldon, NC: 1982), pp. 237, 239, 454. Patents referred to are in Johnston's Bk. 5, P. 350, 354; Dobbs' Bk. 15, p. 480. Hereinafter referenced Hofmann.

15. *The Colonial Record of North Carolina*, Vol. V, pp. 24-25, 356, 362, hereinafter referenced CR. Dobbs also wrote in 1756, "We have not 100 families of Germans in this Province." This seems like an extremely low estimate. The quotation of 22 families has often been believed to refer to the current Rowan-Davie-Davidson-Cabarrus settlements. Based on land grants and extant militia lists, it may actually refer to the area of today's Catawba-Lincoln-Gaston, as there were at least that many land entries, plats, or grants west of the Catawba by 1755. This is supported by the fact that the Moravian settlement at Wachovia had several families by 1755. The frontier had surely moved further west.

16. E. T. Corwin, D. D., Prof. J. H. Dubbs, D. D., and Prof. J. T. Hamilton, *A History of the Reformed Church, Dutch, The Reformed Church, German, and the Moravian Church in the United States*, (New York: 1895), pp. 460-461. Hereinafter referenced Corwin, Dubbs, and Hamilton, Fries, II:551.

17. Hofmann, grant number 4679, was to Jacob Lash as trustee for the "United Brethren," on Stewards Branch of Gargales or Muddy Creek. Also, in 1755 two grants for 920 acres on the same creek near Wachovia were made to Henry Antes, presumably the one from York County, PA. Antes was a leading layman who was attracted to both the Moravians and the Anabaptists.

sometime in Pennsylvania, Maryland, or Virginia before migrating. These earliest settlers had accumulated some wealth prior to migrating to North Carolina and established productive homesteads on the frontier.¹⁸

This research also shows that settlers came in family and neighborhood groups. The earliest settlers originated from northeastern Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and the Oley Valley and Gossenhoppen congregation in Berks County, Pennsylvania. Apparent early "networking" caused friends, fellow congregational members, and acquaintances to communicate the opportunities the land west of the Catawba offered these earliest German settlers.¹⁹

Similar to Weidner, many of these early settlers can be identified through early land grant records. During the period after 1747, the vicinity was in Anson County, and then Rowan County after 1753. Most of the territory was under control of John Carteret, the first Earl of Granville, and therefore, was commonly termed the "Granville District."

The attempt that follows is to place some of the early settlers into the later-named Lyle's Creek community.²⁰ The confusion of early land records also becomes apparent.

Available written records indicate that John Baum might have been the first area settler, but the records also are inconsistent and require great scrutiny. From his early land entry from September 1750:

Hanis Baum, Enters 300 Acres of land in Anson County on the North side of S. Forks of Catawba River & on both sides of Hannis's Creek, Running into the Main Catawba River.

Where is Hannis's Creek? Who was the Hannis after which it was named? Perhaps it was Hannis Baum, but surnames were normally used for the early creeks. Incidentally, the next land entries were as follows:

Adam Shirill Enters 640 Acres of land, in Anson County, on the N. side of Catawba River joining the uper [sic] line of the Manor.

Christop: Goodhart Enters 640 Acres of land in sd County on the N. side of the S: fork of Catawba River, & in the fork of Clarks Creek, Running down for the Complement.²¹

Where were Granville's entry takers on the days of these 1750 transactions? Were they North of the Catawba River, for the Sherrill entry? Were they on Clark's Creek for the Goodhart entry? Or were they on Hannis's Creek? Or could they have been at all three places in one day? Probably not the last.

On 10 July 1751, Baum obtained a plat of 340 acres on the South Fork of "Lillis Creek running into ye Main Cataba River," which suggests that the Creek name had been changed. He is not known to have obtained complete ownership of this land, as this could only occur after a survey and a grant from Lord Granville, which could take up to several years. Baum must have at least been present briefly, but the discovery of the land grant has proved elusive.²²

A second order for a survey appeared on May 2 of 1753: "Hanis Balam," for "six hundred" acres of land

. . . lying in Rowan County, within the said District; on the So side of the Cataba River on Lilles Creek at the three fork, & at a Red Oak Marked thus [blur]

From another survey request to "Christ Goodhart," of the same date:

600 Acres, . . . on the So side of the Cataba River on Lillys Creek below Hanis Balam Land including a White Oak Marked C.
G.²³

18. Susanne Mosteller Rolland, "From the Rhine to the Catawba: A Study of Eighteenth Century Germanic Migration and Adaaptation," (Doctoral Dissertation: Emory University, 1991) discusses the earliest settlers in Chapter Four pp. 194-261 pointing out the sectarian influences in the earliest settlers. On page 244 Rolland states the thesis concerning background of the settlers.

19. *Ibid.*, Chapter Five, pp. 262-316 discusses these connections.

20. Margaret M. Hofmann, *The Granville District of North Carolina, 1748-1763*, Vol. III. (Ahoski, NC, 1989), pp. 53, 75, 79, 92, hereafter cited as Hofmann, *Granville*.

21. A. B. Pruitt, *Colonial Land Entries in North Carolina*, Vol. I, (1994), hereafter cited Pruitt.

22. The first name was probably Johannes or Hans, and the last name might be Baumann [Bowman]. Several Baumanns lived near the Weidners in Pennsylvania.

23. Pruitt.

By 1751, Hanis's Creek was being called "Lillis," "Lilles" or "Lillys" Creek, and both Baum and Goodhart were proceeding with the system towards land ownership. Baum also had a second 385-acre tract surveyed on "Lilles" Creek. Assisting in the survey were Jacob Whitner and Phillip Jacob. In 1753, another survey was requested for "Simon Yonoss," containing 640 acres

... on Both Sides of Elk Creek; above John Balms Lower Entry; including his improvements.²⁴

The same creek was now Elk Creek, and Simon Jonas had already constructed "improvements," and was likely living on the land. This early record poses the possibility that "Hanis's" Creek might have been named for Simon "Yonoss," who could have been present years earlier, and might have been the earliest settler.

A few other early settlers are discovered on a 1752 Granville survey for a 360 acre tract for Henry Shrink on the north Fork of Lilles Creek, next to John "Behm's" corner. Local residents who carried the chains for Granville's surveyor were Christophel Mull and Philip Han [Lahn] -- an indication that these men were also in the neighborhood.²⁵

By 1761, "John Bollins" had apparently relocated, his land was vacant, and a portion of his original entry was claimed by Simon Jonas.

You are forthwith to admeasure and lay out to Simon Jonas a Tract of vacant Land, containing Seven Hundred Acres, lying . . . on both sides of Liles Creek Including his Own Improvements and John Bollins Improvements for the Comple²⁶

It is important to note that the date of Baum's original transaction was in September of 1750 -- the same month as Heinrich Weidner's first land grant.²⁷ The story of the German settlement along Lyle's Creek was beginning to unfold at about the same time as that along other Catawba and South Fork tributaries.

By 1753, there followed Samuel McClintock, George Davison, Jr., James Carter (a Granville surveyor), Edward Cusich, John Hogan [Haggin?], and Adam Sherrill, Jr.. The early development included both English and German landowners, but some of the English may have been land speculators.

The Lyles Creek Germans continued to be ascertained positively in public land records in 1755, when Earl Granville delivered a 640 acre land grant to "Bostin Cline." His land joined that of Philip Jacobs, chain carrier on a survey cited above. During this decade, such persons as Conrad Mull, Conrad Boobey, and John Hagins appear in the records. By this time, the major forks of Lyle's Creek had been given the names of (from East to West) Macklin's, Haggin's, Mull's, Three Forks, Davidson's, and Cline's -- usually named for the earliest settlers. The first three names are still commonly used, and these tributaries flow into Lyle's between Claremont and Catawba. Three Forks became commonly known as Baker's Fork. Davidson's Fork became Conover Creek over a century later. This is the branch that flows at the bottom of the hill just west of St. John's Church. The name of Cline's Fork or Cline's Creek is still in use.

With possession of land, the early settlers were challenged to protect it, and the perils were many. By about 1758, the native Americans, the Indians, became aroused. Within a few years, when the Indians recognized that the white settlers were not going to move away and leave them with their North Carolina forests, many clashes, scalplings, torture, and burnings followed. There were also encounters where the white settlers killed groups of the Indians. Some established families moved to other locations, as did many new pioneers. Land transactions around Lyles Creek became virtually silent for a period of years. The Indian threat subsided about 1761, and the treaty that marked the end of the French-Indian War was signed in 1763.

Afterwards, some early settlers returned, and new (or previously unlisted) names began to appear as landowners along Lyles Creek. They include Peter, Joseph, and John Lowrance, Samuel Sherrill, Richard Lewis, and John Cowen. Earl Granville's land office was closed in 1763, prompting an unusual fifteen year period of obtaining land rights.

By 1763, the Lyles Creek area was fairly well mixed between the German and English-speaking landowners. The area was then in Rowan County. After the closing of Granville's office, and until outbreak of the Revolutionary War, several records of land transactions appear in Mecklenburg and Tryon Counties. Some

²⁴. *Ibid.*

²⁵. *Ibid.*

²⁶. *Ibid.*

²⁷. A. B. Pruitt, *Colonial Land Entries in North Carolina*, Vol. I, entry no. 2809 (1994).

transactions are surely recorded twice, in separate courthouses. New land grants were issued by the Royal Governor, and recorded in additional Court Houses. Also, the land around the Catawba River, that had originally been surveyed for the Moravians was officially released on July 29, 1763.²⁸ It was during the ensuing period that many German-speaking settlers were attracted to the Lyle's (then known as Elk) Creek of Rowan County, and many permanent family names of St. John's appear.

In approximate order of appearance in the records after 1763 are the names of George Smith, Henry Smith, George Pope, John Neill, Philip Adams (yes, he is German), and Henry Pope, George's brother. **On October 30, 1765, Governor Tryon issued the single-most important land grant in St. John's history to Henry Pope – for 350 acres "on both sides of Elk Creek."** This land grant is precisely the spot where St. John's Church was later built. It seems that John Bost lived on this land prior to Pope's arrival, but had never gained ownership.

Other Lyles Creek settlers who received grants that same date were George Smith (same as mentioned above), Jacob Whissenant, and Philip Adams (same as mentioned above).

Then followed (in alphabetical order) Adam Aker (?Eckerd?), Adam Bolch, Thomas Cowan, ?Nicholas? Fry, William Fullbright, Peter Grunt, Michael Hart, John Haun, Andrew Killian, Isaac Lowrance, James Moore, Michael Palmer, ?Martin or Caleb? Pheiffer, Michael Platner, Conrad Shows, Barnet Sigman, Henry Smith, Peter Stutz, Christian Treffelstadt, Boltser Tritt, Conrad Whittenberg, Joseph Whittenberg, and William Whittenberg.

Colonial land warrants ceased in 1774, but a few Lyles Creek transactions appear in Rowan County records, mostly among the various families previously named.

Listing all names of landowners between Lyle's Creek and the Great Catawba prior to the Revolutionary War would be exhaustive; however, many future St. John's family names have already appeared.

No sooner than the area was reasonably safe from the threat of Indian attacks, another threat emerged. By the early 1770's, "the wily serpent of tyranny" had crept into the new land, into North Carolina, and into Rowan County. Area settlers rebuked the British government in its imposition of unfair taxes. The Stamp Act of 1765 and the Import Tax of 1767 were resisted. The charge of a whopping fifteen dollars for a marriage license served little to promote legalization of marriages, and even less, to bolster the people's affection for the King and his Royal Governor. A citizen committee was organized in Rowan County, and resolved that "when any doubt should arise as to fees, they should not be paid to the officers, but to *such officers as were appointed by the people.*" When the Governor intervened with force, the ensuing disruption was known as the "Regulator" movement. Unrest prevailed, and much blood was shed.²⁹

After Massachusetts fell under British control, the clamor began to come forth from other colonies. Sympathy towards Massachusetts came from Philadelphia as early as June 1774. The Shenandoah valley of Virginia, a region also settled by many Germans, became astir during that month, with defiant resolutions for independence as a result of meetings at Fredericksburg, Prince William County, Frederick County, and Woodstock.³⁰

North Carolina resistance to the crown followed, to the point that a unified meeting was held in New Bern on August 25, 1774. Rowan County was represented by three men. Rowan County continued to be adverse to outside oppression in the following years, but few, if any, representatives from its western fringes were present at Colonial meetings. By the following year, the Royal Government had collapsed, and a Provincial Council was established to govern the Colony. County Committees of Safety were then founded as an extension of the Council to the local level.³¹

But prior to the formal Colonial movement, Rowan County had already established a Committee of Safety to maintain law and order in the large county, and to assist settlers in protection of their liberties. This Committee came to open defiance against the King's taxes through its set of resolutions dated August 8, 1774. While its signers acknowledged obedience to the King, they denounced his unilateral right to levy taxes as "arbitrary exertion of power, and an infringement of the constitutional rights and liberties of the colony." The actions of the British Parliament, without representation from North Carolina, were considered "power without right," and

28. Fries, II:551. The exact location of the Moravian tracts has not been researched by this author, but is believed to be north of the River.

29. John H. Wheeler, *Historical Sketches of North Carolina from 1584 to 1851*, Repr., (Frederick H. Hitchcock, New York: 1925), pp. 357-358.

30. Albert Bernhard Faust, *The German Element in the United States*, Vol. I, (Steuben Society of America: 1909; Repr. Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore: 1995), pp. 291, 293f, partially cited from *Virginia Magazine*, X:46.

31. Wheeler, pp. 359-360. The entire Minutes of the Rowan County Committee of Safety are transcribed in Wheeler.

reduced its citizens to a "state of slavery." The Committee sided with the plight of Boston, which had become a principal target for British oppression. The formation of a union of all American Colonies was encouraged to oppose such infringement of rights, and an economic ban was enacted against products imported from Britain. On quite another subject, the Committee "*Resolved, That the African trade is injurious to this colony, . . .*" It strongly encouraged union with the other colonies, and threatened to ban trade with any colony who refused to join.³²

The Rowan "Resolves" were actually among the first formal rumblings of the war for independence, and it is important to note that Lyle's Creek resident, Christopher Beekman, was a charter member of the Rowan Committee of Safety. Others from west of the Catawba include Francis McKorkle, Matthias Barringer, and, possibly, Lyle's Creek's John Cowen. Later members include Lyle's Creek landowners, Peter Mull, Joseph Lowrance, Gilbraith Falls, and Robert King. Griffith Rutherford, who lived east of the Catawba, also had land interests west of the Catawba, and was often a member of the Committee. Also, Committeeman George Davidson had once owned land just south or west of Henry Pope, which he sold to the Siegman family.³³

The Committee organized militia companies, set up a treasury "for defraying future contingencies," fixed the price of gun powder, and did not hesitate to publicly label anyone who opposed their cause for freedom as an "enemy to his country." When militia officers were nominated, they included such names as Capt. Christopher Beekman, Lt. William Beekman, Lt. Windel Miller, Lt. John Sigman, Lt. Henry Miller, Ensign Bolser Sigman, and Ensign John Sigman.³⁴

When the new Colonial Governor, Josiah Martin, attempted to intrude on religious freedoms in 1775, the Committee sternly lashed out at his intentions as

. . . a corrupt gloss upon the diabolical measures of a debauched ministry, tending to seduce the minds of the populace and bring them off from their true interest in opposing the cruel measures of an unjust ministry.³⁵

An advertisement was distributed against Martin's religious proclamation. Committeemen agreed to "rouse like one man in defence of our religion from popery, of our liberty from slavery, and our lives from tormenting death."³⁶

By the time of the war, the population in Rowan County was estimated at 1,250 taxables. In 1770, the area that later became Catawba County has been estimated at 200 families.³⁷

Locally, an important consequence of the independence movement was the flight of Royal Governor Martin and his allies. In 1777, all lands owned by the Crown and Earl Granville were claimed by the new General Assembly of the State of North Carolina. Prior to 1778, many residents could not claim ownership of the land on which they lived for various reasons, and the land was considered legally vacant. The State opened up vacant Land Entry Offices on January 29, 1778, which led to a significant increase in land transactions. The month of December 1778 was surely a great month in the history of the (future) St. John's community, and gives an inkling into other families of the colonial and continental periods. What later became Catawba County had become a part of a new county named Burke on June 1, 1777.

During the month of December 1778, the entries totaled **8,629** acres along Lyle's Creek and its tributaries--a monthly record in the community that can never again be approached. Many of the names are familiar St. John's names. Some are from families that soon migrated again. And the third group, are the families that were present at the formation of St. John's congregations, and relocated after the turn of the century. Before discounting any

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 360-361.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 360-368. Landowners are determined from the sources cited previously. Beekman lived between today's Conover and Claremont. McKorkle lived in the Sherrill's Ford area. Cowan was on Macklins Creek near Catawba. Davidson's land had been just north of Conover, and was sold to the Signans; thus he may have returned to Rowan by this time. Peter Mull owned land along the Catawba/Burke line and also on Mull's Fork of Lyle's Creek. Joseph Lowrance owned land near Catawba. Gilbraith Falls owned land in today's Conover, but probably lived east of the River. Robert King received a Burke County Grant on Lyle's Creek in 1778, and possibly lived in the area earlier. Matthias Barringer lived a mile or two east of downtown Newton. Also, thanks to James W. Miller, Jr., Hickory, NC, who assisted in placing some of them.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*, p. 365.

36. *Ibid.*, 365-366.

37. Presslar, p. 76. Only two hundred families seems like a low estimate.

name below as "not a St. John's member," read the next few chapters and browse through the older stones in the cemetery.

Some of the names on these transactions include (in alphabetical order) the following: Christopher Beekman, Adam Bolick, George Deal, Peter Deal, William Deal, John Dronme, George Eslinger, Peter Gront, Frederick Gross [Graff], Michael Hepner, Devault Hunsucker, John Isonhower, Volintine Isonhower, David Lowrance, Peter Lowrance, George Minges, Jacob Moier, John Olipher, John Oxford, Jacob Roseman, Philip Shifler, Jacob Shuke, John Shuke, Frederick Shull, Christopher Sigman, George Sigman, and Barnet Stavey.

What an incredible month of real estate transactions! During the remainder of 1778, land along Lyles Creek was also granted to Robert King, Gilbreth Fauls, Samuel Steel, Andrew Fulbright, Simon Jonas, William Wertenberger, Col. Martin Pfifer, and Mary Barbry Traffetstate.³⁸

Recent research suggests that a few of the flurry of grants in Burke County were by settlers, who had previously received flawed grants or deeds from the colonial governor or King of England, and that some of the State entries above were requested in order to assure rightful ownership from both King and State. The Germans, unsure of the English system, gathered and re-claimed their land under the new administration. The State Land Office closed on August 1, 1783.³⁹

Similar lists of transactions occurred on the South Fork River, Henry Fork, Jacobs Fork, Clarks Creek, Mountain Creek, etc. The year 1778 was truly an amazing year for land transactions.

Such was the system of obtaining land ownership in the colonial, continental, and early federal period. Since the German settlers were very possessive of their land holdings, much real estate surrounding Lyle's Creek remains within the ownership of descendants of these various families today.

The participation of the German settlers in the Revolutionary War, and others from the river bend area of the Catawba, is very undecided by past historians. As trends seem to have been a family, local, and sectarian phenomenon, generalizations are inconsistent. By 1778, North Carolina enacted the following provision to compensate for the religious beliefs of a portion of the German-speaking population:

. . . That Quakers, Dunkers, Moravians, and Mennonites shall furnish men in proportion to their respective numbers in each county, and in default thereof, the commanding officer of each and every county, is hereby empowered to hire men instead of the men to be by them furnished, and . . . to levy the sum given for such man or men . . . as shall refuse or fail to find a man or men, agreeable to this act.⁴⁰

Yet the German Lutherans, Reformeds, and others are often given the label "pacifists" during the American Revolution. This may have been true early in the war. As the initial encounters were in the north Atlantic colonies, there were fears that the South would not take a similar stance. Philadelphian Joseph Hewes contacted the Pennsylvania clergy of the Presbyterian, "Dutch Lutherans," and Calvinists to write to the ministers and congregations in North Carolina, and "set their Brethren in North Carolina right."⁴¹ Those in Pennsylvania believed

They could no longer regard . . . the Tory governments . . . as custodians of their liberties. Colonial governments had often left German farmers on the frontiers exposed to the terrible depredations of Indians; hence the Germans united with the Scotch-Irish, both in arms and in politics, to secure adequate defense of their homes. Tory governments were turned out. German farmers in the country districts and German artisans in the cities threw the balance of power to the revolutionary party and so helped to secure American independence.⁴²

The frontier farmers were slower in their reaction against English rule than the people in the towns. . . . Those who feared the restrictions that a powerful Congress might impose on them, were opposed to ratification (the federal constitution). This group embraced most of the farmers of . . . the upper districts of North and South Carolina.⁴³

This last paragraph was not strictly the case along Lyle's Creek and the vicinity, as many names have already been listed as members of the Rowan County Committee of Safety, who dared to defy the government of

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 99, 107, 114, 115, 130, 155, 178, 262.

39. W. N. Watt, *The Granville District* (1992), pp. 117-125.

40. *CR*, XIII:415. Action was dated May 8, 1778.

41. *CR*, X:86.

42. Wentz, 1955, p. 48.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

England two years before the United States did. Most historians have suggested that inhabitants of the Thirteen English Colonies divided their loyalties during the American Revolution into Patriot, Neutral, and Loyalist (Tory). Much has been written concerning the German element. Most generalities indicate that they tended to fall into Tory and Neutral categories in a much higher percentage than Patriot. This brief review of the war and the role the St. John's community played in it suggests a different conclusion.

Surmising that early leader, Christopher Beekman, was bi-lingual is fairly easy, as he represented several German-speaking families in legal issues during the 1770's. He would have been hard pressed to have conducted estate administrations for these early people, if he could not read their German wills and other legal documents.

Quite possibly, the first documented deaths of Lyle's Creek landowners in defense of the country were that of Philip Adams and an unidentified Grunt. Adams was most likely a Lutheran, as a Philipina Adams, was later confirmed by a Lutheran pastor at "der Saut Fark". The family name of Grunt appears in later Lutheran records at St. John's, and Adam Grund is buried in the cemetery. A deed exists in the current Burke County area that contains a phrase, where "Philip Adams and Matthias Barrier (Barringer) was killed on." Captain Barringer led a small troop into the John's River area in July of 1776, during the early part of the Revolutionary War. The Indians were being armed by the loyalists of the Western Piedmont, and the mission encountered an ambush, whereby all except one Philip Fry were massacred.⁴⁴

The Cherokee uprising of 1776 reminded the Lyles Creek settlers of the earlier and more serious uprising of the 1750's. On September 1, 1776, General Griffith Rutherford of Rowan County led an expedition of 1,971 infantry and 80 cavalry against the Cherokees. It is assumed that some Lyles Creek settlers traveled with Rutherford as many recruits from west of the Catawba River participated in this expedition.⁴⁵

The call came for counties to furnish soldiers for the Continental line. Of the few men who enlisted into the Continental Army, David Vance and William Neill were from today's Catawba County, with Neill being from Lyle's Creek.⁴⁶ Apparently, neither were German.

By May of 1777, General Griffith Rutherford was authorized to raise up to eight companies of fifty-seven men each from Tryon, Burke (which included Catawba), and Surry Counties to quell the uprisings of the Cherokees. By December, rangers were stationed in Burke County for this purpose, as the area was considered "still in danger." Rutherford maintained his watchful eye on the western front, and by 1779, he reported robbery, the murder of three "friends of America," and "many depredations." Also, the British were recruiting strongly in the area by 1780, and a "conspiracy was forming for a rising immediately after harvest, when the Tories were to slay the principal friends of the cause and march off to the enemy." Rutherford was ordered to seize the leaders of the uprising.⁴⁷ By this time, Cornwallis had captured Charleston and was proceeding north.

General Rutherford, the brigadier general for all of western North Carolina, led a group of militia to attempt to re-capture Charleston in 1778-79. It is not clear whether any recruits from the Lyles Creek area were involved in this expedition but the assumption is that some were. By June 1780 Rutherford had returned to Rowan County and again called out the militia in response to preparations being made by General Lord Cornwallis to invade North Carolina. He effectively used William R. Davie, who led the cavalry, and William Lee Davidson, who led a battalion of infantry. The most immediate threat came from Tories, local citizens loyal to the British cause, who began to assert their support for the impending British invasion of North Carolina. The most significant threat west of the Catawba came on June 13 when John Moore started recruiting a Tory army at Ramsour's Mill near present Lincolnton. The subsequent Battle of Ramsours Mill of June 20 pitted many Tryon County neighbors against their neighbors in a bloody battle which resulted in a Whig victory and dissolution of the Tory force.⁴⁸ While the

44. Presslar, p. 74. Matthias Barringer lived at the headwaters of Clark's Creek, near the Deals, Setzers, Minges's, George Pope, and Philip Adams. Adams was also connected to Lyles Creek and owned land near Henry Pope, George Smith, and the Grunt (later named Grounds) family. The location of Philip Fry proves more difficult, as Nicholas Frye lived near Barringer, but Fry's also owned land on Lyle's Creek. A monument in memory of these soldiers is on the lawn of the Old Catawba County Court House in Newton. Most of these families were Lutheran after the turn of the century.

45. Robert C. Carpenter, "Griffith Rutherford: North Carolina Frontier Military and Political Leader." (Master's Thesis: Wake Forest University, 1974, pp. 37-41, hereafter cited Carpenter, "Rutherford").

46. Emmitt White lecture, Catawba County Genealogical Society, 24 October 1995.

47. CR, XIV, x, 132.

48. The Tory contingent at the Battle of Ramsour's Mill has been accurately described as having a high percentage of German Tories from west of the Catawba River. This assertion appears correct; however, a clearer description of these German Tories would be that they were Germans living primarily in current western and central Lincoln County and in northwestern Gaston County. See Lorena Shell Eaker, *Shoe Cobbler's*

presence of Lyles Creek neighbors in this battle as either Tories or Whigs have not been determined, certainly this engagement so close to their home tended to influence them and later circumstances. After the Ramsour and other partisan engagements Rutherford again gathered militia to join General Horatio Gates in an effort to meet and defeat Lord Cornwallis. Again it is assumed that Lyles Creek contributed recruits for this expedition. The disaster of the Battle of Camden brought chaos to the Patriot cause in North Carolina.⁴⁹

After Gates's defeat Cornwallis marched to Charlotte and dispatched Major Patrick Ferguson to recruit Tories from western South and North Carolina. Further orders came forth to muster men from the local area, and by October of 1780, over 1,500 were camped in Rutherford County. Many were from current Tennessee as well as North Carolina.⁵⁰ The Battle of Kings Mountain has been described as a turning point in the Revolution in the south. After the battle of King's Mountain, "the Loyalists in North Carolina no longer dared rise. It fired the patriots with great zeal."⁵¹ For all intents, the war was over in this section after the smoke from King's Mountain cleared, although there was a skirmish here or there, and many young men were sent on later campaigns.⁵²

The public record suggests that the British failure to recruit southern Tories to fill the British military ranks contributed to the British defeat in North Carolina and subsequently in the south. The Patriot successes at Ramsour's Mill, other partisan skirmishes prior to the Battle of Camden, and the Battles of Kings Mountain and Cowpens contributed heavily to this success. All these successes impacted the inhabitants of the area west of the Catawba River and the German settlers here contributed to this success.⁵³

With acknowledgment that there are errors and omissions, the following area names appear on various Revolutionary War lists, and are possibly from the future St. John's community, which was anything south of the Great "Catawby" River, and including that of the current Newton-Conover-Claremont-Catawba area -- and farther.⁵⁴

Pvt. Philip Adams⁵⁵

A second Philip Adams⁵⁶

Conrad Adams⁵⁷

Capt. Matthias Barringer⁵⁸

Col. Christopher Beekman⁵⁹

Capt. William Beekman

Caspar Bolick⁶⁰

Philip Burns⁶¹

Kin, Vol. I (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1976), hereafter cited as Eaker, *SCK* and Robert C. Carpenter, *Carpenters A Plenty* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1982), hereafter cited as Carpenter, *CAP* for more details on the Tories at the battle.

49. Carpenter, "Rutherford," pp. 70-86.

50. *CR*, XIV:28,663.

51. R. D. W. Connor, *History of North Carolina, Volume I, The Colonial and Revolutionary Periods 1584-1783*, (Chicago and New York: 1919), p. 474, cited from *History of the United States*, (ed. 1888), Vol. V. p. 400. Emmitt White lecture, cited above.

52. Patriot efforts included the Battle of Cowpens, partisan activities by William R. Davie and William Lee Davidson when they impeded the march of Cornwallis's army in 1781, and the 1781 Wilmington Campaign headed by General Rutherford in which many persons west of the Catawba participated.

53. See Carpenter, "Rutherford", for a discussion of this analysis.

54. The following is **ONLY** the repetition of coincidence of names from several sources. Nothing is proven by the author. Those who wish to use this list as a family historical authority are advised not to do so, but may check the sources and form their own opinions. The abbreviations in the following footnotes are as follows: LG—"Land Grant or similar land record"; CR—"The Colonial Records of North Carolina"; Pr—Presslar's, "History of Catawba County"; SJ—"St. John's cemetery or other records"; LE—Lorena Eaker's, "German Speaking People, etc.;" RWP—"Revolutionary War Pension"; PR—"Personal research of the author, but not positively proven"; AC—"Johann Gottfried Arends Confirmation Lists in Lincoln County;" DAR—Daughters of American Revolution records. Most (if not all) of these sources can be found in the Catawba County Library. Without a single doubt, many names can be easily verified.

55. LG; CR 22:55-92; Pr. p. 81. Killed by the Indians in 1776.

56. LG, inherited his father's by the same name; CR 16:1006.

57. EA, p. 61, Possibly the younger Philip's brother. Pr. p. 81. AC.

58. CR 10:253; Pr. p. 81; Killed by the Indians in 1776.

59. LG; CR 10:253; Pr. p. 81. LE p. 409, RWP of Andrew Shook list a Col. Christopher Bateman and Capt. William Bateman as his officers.

60. LE, p. 85, RWP; Pr. p. 81.

Boston Cline62
 Inf. & Cav. Michael Cline63
 Pvt. Jacob Dail64
 Pvt. John Dail65
 Philip Drum66
 Martin Ekard67
 John Eslinger68
 Pvt. Nicholas Frye (?Jr.?)69
 Drummer Philip Frye70
 Jacob Fulbright71
 John Fulbright72
 Adam Grunt73
 unnamed Grunt74
 George Harmon75
 Michael Houk76
 Nicholas Houk77
 John Huffman78
 Henry Ikerd79
 Peter Isenhower80
 Capt. Simon Jonas⁸¹
 Mical Keller82
 Michael Klein83
 Capt. Peter Little84

61. RWP, served under Capt. George Smith. Father was Conrad Burns, with land on Lyle's Creek.

62. LG; Pr. p. 81.

63. AC 1776; CR 22:62; Pr. p. 81; LE, p. 85, from RWP for Caspar Bolick.

64. CR 22:55-92; EA, p. 134.

65. CR 22:55-92; LE, p. 133.

66. Pr. p. 81; LG, 1778; LE, pp. 148-149. John and Philip Drum were on Elk Shoals Creek, north of St. John's by this time.

67. Pr. p. 81; LE, p. 156, Martin may have been the son of Adam Eckert (LG), who married into another Lyle's Creek Family (Treffelstadt).

68. There is a long story here. A John Eslinger (of today's Catawba County) was accused of desertion in the Col. McDowell courtmartial trial. He had been hired by a Hunsucker (perfectly legal at that time), among other people (indicating he lived nearby, but the second engagement for hire was not so legal, and it is not known which came first.). He apparently deserted one or both, but the same unusual surname is found dead as "a Lt. Eslinger" during the Battle of Eutaw Springs, SC. The name of John Eslinger never again appears in Catawba County, and his Burke County Land Entry is marked "not paid." LE p. 163. See also the courtmartial trial at Catawba County Library. This is not proven at all that the dead soldier is the John Eslinger of Catawba County, but he does not seem to be proven elsewhere either.

69. LE, p. 175, RWP; CR 22:55-92; Pr. p. 81.

70. CR, 22:55-92; Pr. p. 81.

71. LE, p. 177, RWP; SJ; Jacob Fulbright witnessed St. John's original deed of 1798.

72. LE, p. 177, RWP.

73. SJ; Pr. p. 81; DAR, p. 289.

74. Killed by Indians in 1776. Monument at courthouse.

75. Pr. p. 81. If this is son of Johannes Wilhelm Herman, he would have been about about 16-18 years old in the war, LE, p. 221.

76. AC 1776; Pr. p. 81; LE p. 232, married Elizabeth Killian, daughter of Andrew Killian, who is buried at St. John's.

77. Pr. p. 81. LE p. 232, RWP.

78. 1790 Census; SJ; Pr. p. 81; CR 6:1083-4.

79. Pr. p. 81. LE, p. 247.

80. LE, p. 249; Killed in RW??

⁸¹. CR 11:443.

82. CR 15:728.

83. LE, p. 107, RWP; DAR, p. 392.

84. SJ; cemetery; Pr. p. 82; was probably living in Rowan County during war, but moved here about 1800.

Conrad Mingus⁸⁵
 Jacob Moyers⁸⁶
 Capt. Philip Null⁸⁷
 Pvt. John Oliver⁸⁸
 Col. Caleb Pfeifer⁸⁹
 Col. Martin Pfeifer⁹⁰
 George Pope⁹¹
 Adam Setzer⁹²
 Pvt. Andrew Shooks⁹³
 Pvt. Jacob Shooks⁹⁴
 Lt. Bolser Sigman⁹⁵
 Pvt. George Sigman⁹⁶
 Capt. John Sigman⁹⁷
 Capt. Daniel Smith⁹⁸
 Capt. George Smith⁹⁹
 Capt. Henry Smith¹⁰⁰
 Russell Yunt ¹⁰¹

Tories: Abraham A. Barrier was listed as one of the "undesirable Tories" in Spartanburg, South Carolina in 1783. He was granted land in 1780 which he later sold to George Deel. He also entered land with Balsor Sigmon, joining Barnard Staway and John Isonhower on 22 June 1778, which was sold in 1784 to Balsor Sigmon. He became an ordained "regular baptist" minister, founding ten churches and two schools in his migrations through Kentucky to Alabama.¹⁰²

The German element of Americana has often been accused of complacency during the War for Independence. Without question, there were those in the St. John's community who maintained allegiance to the King of England, as there were frequent reports about the Loyalists in the area.¹⁰³ Jacob Shook and two others instituted one Burke County lawsuit, apparently related to the Battle of Ramsour's Mill. While found by the court to be "not a true bill," the three alleged that about two hundred men "aided in the King's cause."¹⁰⁴ There must

85. LE, p. 384, RWP; LG.

86. LG; CR 22:447; was present at Treffelstadt estate sale in 1770's.

87. LE, p. 322; DAR, p. 501.

88. LG; CR 16:1130, 1131.

89. DAR, p. 531; Caleb owned land on Haggins Fork, but it is unclear that he lived there.

90. LG; CR 22:55-92; DAR, p. 531. Martin also owned land in several counties, and it is not proven that he lived here.

91. LG; Pr. p. 82. George Pope seems to have moved to Kentucky by 1778. This could be another George Pope.

92. LE, p. 384, RWP.

93. CR 22:55-92; LE, p. 408-409, RWP.

94. LG; CR 22:55-92; LE, p. 408, RWP, served under Capt. Daniel Smith and Rudolph Conrad.

95. SJ, cemetery; CR 10:320; Pr. p. 82; on Rowan Militia.

96. AC 1776; SJ, cemetery; CR 22:85; Pr. p. 82. Note that there were two George Sigmans in the area, and these citations could be for either one.

97. AC 1776; CR 10:320; Pr. p. 82. Note there were three or four John Sigmans, and all seem to be on Clarks or Lyles Creek.

98. EA p. 408.

99. LG; CR 16:115; 15:732,750; note that the latter may be for another Captain George Smith. See also Kathy G. Sullivan's transcription of the Colonel Joseph McDowell Courtmartial Trial.

100. LG; CR 22:55-92.

101. Pr. p. 82.

102. Lorena Shell Eaker, *German Speaking People West of the Catawba River in North Carolina 1750-1800 and Some Emigres' Participation in the Early Settlement of Southeast Missouri*, (Franklin, NC: Genealogy Pub. Service, 1994), p. 76. RCC: Mark was able to only identify this one person as a Tory who came from the Lyles's Creek area.

103. Presslar, p. 81. Several incidents are in CR, and nearly every other Revolutionary War source.

104. A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Sales of Confiscated Loyalist Land and Property in North Carolina*, (1989), p. 127.

have been some merit to the accusations, though the court did not render a single guilty verdict. The name list above, nearly all of whom were German, suggests quite the contrary for the settlers along the bend of the Catawba River. Upon surrender of Cornwallis, those who had been loyal to the King during the war were subject to confiscation of their property. Not one Lyle's Creek name appears on the Lincoln and Burke County property confiscation lists of the 1780's, and only one confiscation was reported for all of Burke County.¹⁰⁵

Another possible explanation for the almost universal confusion concerning German allegiance during the American Revolution involves the time and circumstance. For example, almost all residents West of the Catawba would have been considered Patriots during the 1776 Cherokee Expedition. These settlers would have been defending their homes from Indian attacks. Many Germans served in this expedition and descendants have entered the Daughters of the American Revolution because of it.¹⁰⁶ For the next few years in frontier North Carolina many Germans and others did not have to face the conflict because it was waged far from here. But in 1780 the war came to South Carolina and then to North Carolina. During the pre-Camden campaign many Germans and others supported the British cause. In the area of present Gaston, Lincoln, and Catawba Counties British allegiance seemed to soar until after the Battle of Ramsours Mill. Because of the Tory defeat there and after Ferguson's loss at the Battle of Kings Mountain, British sympathizers who remained in this area either became neutral or became Patriots. Finally, the North Carolina legislature passed a law which provided one method by which former Tories could avoid the previously enacted Tory Confiscation Law. These Tories could actually enlist in the North Carolina army or the Continental army. A glimpse at the 1781 Wilmington Expedition led by General Rutherford shows that many Germans and others enlisted and served.¹⁰⁷

So the determination of Tory, Whig, or Neutral in the Revolution depended upon the time period of the war and the circumstances surrounding it. In addition the role of the militia captain's allegiance may have influenced his militiamen's decision.

The Revolutionary War provided one unplanned method of German migration to North Carolina. During the war, the British often employed the use of Hessian soldiers, who were Germans hired to fight for the British cause. Often, when they found themselves in communities settled by their kinsmen, they deserted the British and remained in the new world. Such a case is reported for a man named Null. Tradition in the Fry family suggests he married into the Winebarger family and lived in the Lyle's Creek community. The earliest readable tombstone in the St. John's cemetery (1800) bears the name of John Null, there was a Null School between St. John's and St. Peter's well into the twentieth century, and the Null family name remains in the area.¹⁰⁸ Evidence of this Null's Hessian service has not been established.

During the war, county alignment again became a local issue. When today's Catawba County was included as a part of Burke in 1777, the wrangling over location of the new county seat ensued. Burke then encompassed the areas of Catawba, Burke, Caldwell, and other areas to the west. Some felt the courthouse should be constructed in the western area which was more central to the entire county, and the decision to locate it in the new town of Morgantown did not satisfy most along the South Fork and to the east and north. After all, the trip to quarterly court sessions was only reduced from about sixty miles (to Salisbury) to about forty (to Morganton) for many locales. It still required three or more days of travel time to accomplish routine civil matters, such as getting a deed proven in court.

With the formation of Lincoln County, and its courthouse location, a movement began to secede from Burke County and become a part of Lincoln. Most along the bend of the river could reach Lincoln Courthouse in one day's ride on horseback. By the early 1780's, lengthy petitions were gathered. The first signer was Henrich Weitner, followed by Maj. George Willfong, Capt. Henrich Weitner, Jacob Cotner, Justice Peter Moll, and Capt. John Dellinger. This suggests that the leadership of the movement was along the Jacobs and Henry Forks (about

105. *Ibid.*, p. 141. RCC: Mark Smith is the first to point out that German Revolutionary allegiance was more complex than previously thought. His research shows that the Lyles Creek area differed from other German settlements which were proven to be more Loyalist: the Warlick settlement and Germans living in current central and western Lincoln County and Germans in northwest Gaston County. See also Eaker, *SCK*, Vol. 1 and Carpenter, *CAP* for details about these German Tories.

106. See *CAP*, p. 497-498 for an example.

107. See *SCK*, Vol. 1, pp. 24-30 for examples.

108. A. L. Crouse, *Historical Sketches of Alexander County, North Carolina: Friendship Lutheran Church; Hopewell Reformed Church; and Charity Baptist Church; and of the Bowman and Fry Families*, publ. 1905, repr. (Taylorsville: Historical Reprints, no date), p. 51, repr. p. 30. This publication does not give his first name but states that Null "married a Miss Weinberger." This was based on oral tradition.

equal distance between Lincolnton and Morganton). But the petition soon moved eastward, including names of Justice Joseph Steel, Justice John Alexander, Henrich Bollinger, and Capt. William Diehl -- all near today's Newton.¹⁰⁹

Eventually, the petition found its way towards the north, with the following among the probable Lyle's or upper Clark's Creek names (spelled as seen): Adam Bolch, Boston Bolack, Gaspar Bolock, Jacob Bolock, Daniel Boman, James Cowan, William Frisel, Philip Geiger, Fradrack Graff, Anthony Graves, William Graves, Peter Grund, Melchi Hefner, Michal Hevenner, James Hennen, Tevalt Hunsont, John Joneses, Simin Joneses, Peter Jünd, John Killen, Fritrich Mausser, Georg Menges, Georg Menges (another), Conrad Menges, Johaness Menges, Henry Pops, Eberhard Reichman, Johaness Schmeier, Gorg Schmidt, Jacob Setzer, Frederick Shul, Balser Siegman, Berndhart Siegman, Bernt Siegman, Georg Siegman, Georg Siegman (another), Georg Siegman (a third), Henrich Siegman, Henrig Siegman, Jerg Siegman (a forth), John Sumer, Conrad Tipong, William WitingBurg, and John Yont.¹¹⁰

The movement may have been aggravated by the events of the war. Upon the local Whig victory, many had become disgruntled with the actions of Col. Charles McDowell. Many were angry at his recruiting officer, Mordecai Clarke, who traversed the German communities, and was accused of perpetuating fraudulent practices. This resulted in a fairly lengthy court-martial trial against McDowell, and seemed to be a fairly unified effort from the eastern part of Burke County (today's Catawba). With Daniel McKisick presiding, others presenting testimony included two Germans, Capt. Henry Weitner (Jr.) and Capt. Gorg Schmidt of Lyle's Creek.¹¹¹

Although convicted of several charges, McDowell was soon pardoned due to the unusual circumstances of the war. He was later appointed to head the new Morgan Superior Court in *Morganton*; thereby, placing him in a position of direct power over his former accusers.¹¹² This must have added to the clamor for uniting with Lincoln County, and by 1784, this was accomplished through the Legislature, and the Lincoln Courts began to handle the affairs of its northern annexation.¹¹³

After formation of the United States of America, the first census was held in the year 1790. The vicinity of Lyle's Creek was in the Morgan District, Fifth Militia Company, of Lincoln County. The following is an alphabetical list of surnames included therein:

Armstrong, Baker, Bolick, Bolock, Bridges, Burnfield, Gillars, Clubb, Coon, Cowan, Crider, Dawfey, Deil (Deal), Delph, Drum, Edwards, Eher (Eckard), Erlinger (Eslinger), Festler, Freflesstet (Travis), Frissell, Frizzel, Fulbright, Goforth, Goodwin, Graff, Graves, Gross, Grount, Harris, Hayner, Hessian, Hunsucker, Isehour, Johnson, Jonas, Justice, Keller, Killian, Levanne (Lafone), Loutsiba (?Lutz?), Lowrance, Lucamore, Mass, Mathes, Moses, Null, Oliver, Orm (Arendt), Owin, Oxford, Philips, Pope, Rosemond, Shuke (Shook), Sigman, Sloan, Smith, Stayway, Syps, Sypes (Sipe), Trafletstet, Treflestet (third spelling, and it is still Travis), Turr, Whittenberg, Wineberger, Williams, Woodring, Yount.¹¹⁴

About fourteen to sixteen of the sixty-odd family names appear English-speaking. When multiple families with the same surnames are considered, the district consisted of about 75% from German-speaking ancestry. It should be noted that the early census information is not always accurate, and spellings of German names were horrendous. The early membership of St. John's surely crossed the lines into other census "Companies," and into other Counties (particularly north and east), but these listings would be exhaustive, and are not included herein.

Whether these families were the precise nuclei of the various, original, St. John's congregations is indeterminable, as early records of attendance or participation do not appear until much later. However, it is certain that many of these family names were included in the formation of the early "Church on the Hill."

Due to the concentration of Protestant "Dutch" settlers prior to 1800, it is likely that religious services were held during this period of time. The "Dutch Meeting House," "Saut Fark Cataber," or "south Catawba" (later

109. Original is located in NC State Archives. Copy was furnished by Anne W. McAllister, Hickory, NC. Many signatures are in German script, and some were not decipherable from the copy.

110. *Ibid.*

111. Kathy G. Sullivan has transcribed the entire proceedings of this trial, from records in the NC State Archives. Capt. Gorg Schmidt is definitely the one on Lyle's Creek, as he described the activities of several of his neighbors, one of whom he said lived within a mile of him.

112. Emmitt White lecture, cited above.

113. Anne W. McAllister and Kathy G. Sullivan, *Lincoln County, North Carolina Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, April 1779-January 1789*, (1988), July and October Sessions, 1784.

114. *1790 Census*. About 73 of the 98 households appear to be of German-speaking ancestry, with a few not determinable by the author.

named Old St. Paul's), is listed as being founded from 1759 to 1771, and many of the early German settlers along Lyle's Creek and "bend of Catawba River" are recorded as attending religious services there. Also, it was not uncommon for the early pioneers to hold religious services in a prominent residence of the community, or even in a barn or other suitable structure, or under the "arbor" created by trimming back the lower tree limbs. Due to lack of religious organizations (synods, classes, diocese, conferences, etc.), ordained pastors were scarce, and their appearance was infrequent.

Nevertheless, the Church belongs to the people, and by the late 1700's, the German-speaking church people were firmly established in the community, had tamed the land and had defended it against both native and foreign enemies. Religious services had begun on the waters of Lyle's Creek.

And he hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, even a land that floweth with milk and honey. Deuteronomy 26:9

Chapter 2

EARLY CIRCUIT RIDERS

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. Matthew 10: 16

The early preachers were hardy souls with great convictions towards the spread and nurturing of their religious beliefs. One pastor may serve up to ten or twelve congregations -- or more. This often required days of travel, through discomforts of rain or snow, heat and cold, and across poorly constructed dirt roads or trails through the woods, in order to occasionally contact the oftentimes remote Christian settlers of German descent. The earliest pastors were confronted with many perils, and the efforts were not as glamorous as they are often portrayed, as the following excerpts from pastors' writings illustrate:

I have long journeys to make to my charges. . . . The roads are very bad in winter and in summer it is almost too hot to travel over them.¹

My health has suffered considerably from the extensive riding in the intense summer heat. During the last two summers I served on the same Sunday two rather widely separated charges, and through the singing, preaching and especially the strenuous riding during the hot noonday hours I suffered a great deal.²

As the people feared the Indians I rode mostly at night and the last night of my journey I rode all night until sunrise.³

. . . But there I had to try my credit. I was barefooted. I probably had enough money for leather to make a pair of shoes, but I could not pay the shoemaker. He was a German. I offered him a silver necklace as a favor until I arrived home again, but the man did not take it, still he made the shoes.⁴

I had a decent bed only I had a multitude of fleas as company who did not let me rest until daylight. Then I went into a small woods in a field, laid myself on the grass, took my shirt off, twisted it into a knot as hard as I could and beat it against a tree. Then I put it on again, lay down on the grass, covered myself with the shirt and slept until sunrise. A lesson for young folks.⁵

There the mountains were so near to each other. I found my way with my feet because it grew so dark. But a large old tree had fallen across the path so that I could not find the way any more. Then we had to content ourselves to lodge there. By the stony path we laid the saddle for a head rest. On it placed our garments and so tried to sleep. After tying the horses the cry of the night owls sounded through the woods making my wife afraid. After midnight the wolves commenced making their music. At three o'clock the moon rose and at four o'clock it was so high that I could find my way. We traveled until it was daylight . . .⁶

I had a pair of leather gloves on the road to keep my hands warm, but they did not and my right hand was frozen so badly that for a whole year I had no feeling in it. When we arrived at Smitty's River we found it swollen from the heavy rains and frozen on the other side more than half way across. One could ride about fifteen steps in the water, but to get the horses on the ice, as it was about thirty paces to

1. William K. Boyd and Charles A. Krummel, Duke University, translation, "German Tracts Concerning the Lutheran Church in North Carolina During the Eighteenth Century," *North Carolina Historical Review*, Volume 7, Numbers 1 and 2, (January and April 1930), p. 246.

Hereinafter referenced *Helmstaedt Reports*.

2. *Ibid.* p. 262.

3. Finske transl., *Autobiography of the Reverend Paul Henkel*, typed transcr., p. 9.

4. *Ibid.* p. 17.

5. *Ibid.* p. 18.

6. *Ibid.* p. 22.

the land on the other side where the ice was frozen thick, still it would not hold me on the horse. When I drove him upon it out of the water, which reached to his breast, it immediately broke again. When the animal became frightened he made the next jump farther still. The front hoof went on first, then he tumbled forward. His head went down and my feet stood on the ground in the water over his hips. I stepped on a large stone lying there until he again got on his feet, then mounted again and caught the bridle. He turned about before I could control him and shook the water out of his ears and was on the land. . . . 7

. . . I rode to the vicinity of Dutchman's Creek. There I had difficulty in getting over the south Yadkin River. It was swollen very much. The crossing is there where the same flows into the North Yadkin. . . . As the stream flowed very rapidly and we could hold ourselves no longer we turned the boats to the other side. The boatman feared we would get to the confluence of the two streams, or rivers and be carried away by the larger one. . . . I rode on until night, then I came on to a dam of gathered water from the North Yadkin. The water had crossed the road so that I almost had to swim in order to get through.8

Competent German preachers to the frontiers of North Carolina were in very short supply for obvious reasons. As early as 1754, Pastor Henry Melchor Muhlenberg, noted Lutheran pastor in Pennsylvania, plus two other Pastors, made pleas to London and also to Halle Seminary.

Many thousands of Lutheran people are scattered throughout North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, etc. No provision is made for the traveling expenses of the pastors, or supplies for their places, if these Lutherans are to be cared for. People come often one and even two hundred miles to hear a sermon and receive the sacrament, and weep bitterly over the destitution, which no one endeavors to remove.9

Pastors in the New World were often expected to maintain their own families, offer services to their parishioners, and perform missionary activities at their own expense. After all, from whom would the pastors expect to receive compensation? Certainly not from the poor German immigrants, who sometimes had large land holdings, but had not yet established themselves, and had little money. This was contrary to the European practice where a pastor was employed full time in his profession. A pastor's support was often raised through collection of local taxes in the old country, and the salary paid by the government.

As the German-speaking settlers migrated to the Carolina frontier, very few ordained pastors accompanied them. The Pennsylvania area was facing a woeful shortage of pastors itself, and the prevailing customs for ordination virtually mandated the formal education from a German or Dutch university in most denominations. Its congregations were forced to recruit the services of school masters, as these were often the most highly educated persons available to provide some form of religious ministry. If no school master was available, they then turned to a devout layman. In Pennsylvania after the German Reformed Coetus was organized by Rev. Michael Schlatter in 1747, it came under the supervision of the "Holland fathers," and the few ordinations that followed required Holland's endorsement. While the Pennsylvania Lutheran Synod, organized a year later, was not regulated as strictly, its practice seemed to inhibit, rather than promote, ordinations.

As trained clerical candidates began to arrive more frequently, they were not always found to acclimate themselves to the more rugged life in the new land, nor to the varying church polity which existed under the complete freedom of congregational control; consequently, the hope for a successful career in the full-time ministry was very uncertain. As migration continued southward and westward, the shortage of trained pastors became even more pronounced, and the distances and geography made the attraction of recognized and legitimately-ordained pastorate to these remote areas even more difficult.

The Moravians from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, were the first to respond, as the area West of the Catawba was visited by Augustus Gottlieb Spangenburg in 1752. He was the first known ordained Lutheran Pastor to visit the area, but he was not here to preach, nor was he still a member of the Lutheran Church. Spangenburg was exploring to select a site for a German settlement for a group from his later-adopted fraternity, the Unity of Brethren, or Moravians. Portions of the Catawba Valley were thoroughly explored and much property was surveyed in anticipation of the settlement. The site selection group opted for a large tract in the current

7. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

9. Jacobs, p. 247, referenced from *Halle Reports*.

Forsyth/Stokes County areas, and the early communities of Bethabara, Bethania, and later, Old Salem, were soon formed. Imagine the religious difference, had Spangenburg's party selected one or more of the surveyed properties about sixty miles to the west and southwest.¹⁰

Soon, Wachovia was provided with Pastor Bernard Adam Grube, who arrived in 1753.¹¹ Reliably-recorded German ministry begins with Grube's arrival, although Grube's appearance is not known west of the Catawba River.

An early report of the condition of religion in western North Carolina is from the journal of the itinerant Anglican Minister, Charles Woodmason, who primarily served the upland area of South Carolina, but who made several trips through the North Carolina frontiers. His earliest report from the 1760's related that a "Number of Sectaries overspread the Country, and the Danger that not only the Church Established, but even Religion it Self will be totally lost and destroyed if not quickly attended to." Woodmason was aware of the Moravian settlement at Wachovia, and he disparagingly described the religious activities of the Presbyterians and the Anabaptists from Pennsylvania, believing them to be detrimental to the progress of the church.¹²

There are 2 or 3 Itinerant Ministers in the Northern Part (or Lord Granvills [sic] Division) of the Province, and several Small Chapels are built in that District--But not a Church or Minister in any one Town of their Province, Maritime or Inland. . . . But these Baptists have great Prevalence and footing in North Carolina, and have taken such deep Root there that it will require long Time and Pains to grub up their Layers.

The Manners of the North Carolinians in General, are Vile and Corrupt--The whole Country is a Stage of Debauchery Dissoluteness and Corruption--And how can it be otherwise? The People are compos'd of the Out Casts of all the other Colonies who take Refuge there. . . . Marriages (thro' want of Clergy) are perform'd by ev'ry ordinary Magistrate. Polygamy is very Common--Celibacy much more--Bastardy, no Disrepute--Concubinage General--When will this Augean Stable be cleans'd!¹³

Woodmason did not detail the early German settlements, other than Wachovia, but it is apparent that the German communities were being served by a very few of their own language. Among these few pastors were some of questionable motive and ability. Who were these Baptists? There was not a Baptist Church west of the Catawba until well after the Revolutionary War. Or was there? Were the early settlers so immoral that they popularized polygamy, bastardy and concubinage? Or were they so strict in their personal lives that celibacy was preferred to avoid lustful temptations?

One report from 1774 states, the preacher of the Lutherans was a young man who had brought no other credentials from Germany than "a black coat", indicating this pastor was not formally educated and ordained, or could not prove it.¹⁴

Later, similar reports were sent to Germany, that German settlers "were exposed to roaming fanatics, who in some places have already found a considerable following among the ignorant." Also, "the absence of good preachers caused these people . . . to take refuge to such men, who, like roaming knights, traverse the land, and, after they were no longer able to make their living because of the evil conduct in their profession, -- became preachers."¹⁵

Even a Baptist Pastor from Alamance County felt the early German pastors did not "stimulate piety or improve the character of their hearers." He questioned their ordination status and thought they "did not lead lives

10. Adelaide L. Fries, M. A. LITT. D., Editor, *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina*, Vol. V, (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1947), p. 2417.

11. Fries, 1:81.

12. Richard J. Hooker, *The Carolina Backcountry on the Eve of the Revolution, The Journal and Other Writings of Charles Waadmason, Anglican Itinerant*, (UNC Press, Chapel Hill: 1953), pp. 76-81.

13. *Ibid.* As these pastors were often very denominationally oriented, while the people were not so strongly opinionated on doctrine, the subjects of these critical comments could very well have been upstanding members in other protestant churches.

14. Rev. W. J. Mann, and Rev. B. M. Schmucker, assisted by Rev. W. Germann, D. D., and translated from the German by Rev. C. W. Schaeffer, D. D., with introduction by Dr. John Ludwig Schulze, *Reports of the United German Evangelical Lutheran Congregations in North America, Specially in Pennsylvania*, commonly called "Halle Reports, New Edition," (Philadelphia: 1882), p. 48. Hereinafter referenced *Halle Reports*.

15. *Helmsstedt Reports*, pp. 12, 128..

as to recommend them to the confidence of the churches." He summarized that "for a long time these German settlements suffered for want of ministers of the right kind."¹⁶

An eighteenth century historian described some of these itinerant pastors as "rambling vagabonds."¹⁷

The reader should not feel so forlorn, as these pastors were often describing those from other religious traditions, and kind words of praise and accomplishment should not be expected. Moreover, most early German histories in North Carolina prefer to state that there were few, if any, pastors, who accompanied the earliest settlers. To the contrary, there are many more religious leaders west of the Catawba than are customarily known, and after such dismal reports of religious and social conditions, it seems of interest to describe the earliest German pastors, and possibly a few "roving fanatics" or "rambling vagabonds," who might have circulated in the Piedmont region of North Carolina.

Reformed Pastor Christian Theus was present in the Saxe Gotha township, just south of the Congaree River, in upland South Carolina, by 1739, and remained there for over fifty years. He was ordained by the Presbyterians in Charleston, and was considered "an upright Reformed preacher" by the Lutheran, Muhlenberg.¹⁸

A second German-speaking Pastor, John Ulrich Geissendanner, with his nephew of the same name, settled in the Orangeburg Township of South Carolina by the year 1753. Swiss research indicates that he was neither Lutheran nor Reformed, but was labeled an "Illuminist." Upon his death, his nephew succeeded him after ordination into the Anglican Church. The Geissendanners were followed into the southern Province by Reformed Rev. John Gasser, who located in the Broad River settlement by the next year, and later moved to the Savannah River area on the Georgia/South Carolina line. He was accompanied by the first known Lutheran Pastor in the Carolinas, Rev. John George Friedrichs "von Hannover," who first preached in Charleston, and later moved to the backcountry.¹⁹

It has been reported that a Swiss German Reformed Minister Martin visited the western Piedmont area of North Carolina in 1759.²⁰ Many German Reformed histories cite a Rev. James Martin as the first German pastor in many churches and regions. The only German-speaking Rev. Martin that can be found in North Carolina during this period is John Nicolaus Martin, from Zweibrücken in Rhenish Bavaria. His grandson, who authored his biographical sketch, stated his affiliation as Lutheran, rather than Reformed. He possibly arrived on the ship "Barclay" in 1754. Muhlenberg describes Pastor Martin as "autodidact," or self-taught, and ordained by the Saltzburger in Georgia. Martin's grandson related that the Pastor first settled in "the Waxhaw country, in Anson County, near the border of South Carolina," in 1759, and moved onto Crims Creek of the Saluda River, in the Dutch Forks of South Carolina, by 1762. He served the remainder of his career at various churches in South Carolina. Martin's visit west of the Catawba cannot be documented, but the time frame of his supposed arrival, and location of his temporary residence, coincide exactly with traditional history. Martin could have been the first resident Lutheran pastor in North Carolina, and the first to have preached west of the Catawba, in then-Rowan and Anson Counties.²¹ His ordination by 1759 is not verified.

16. George Washington Paschal, *History of North Carolina Baptists*, Vol. 1, 1663-1805, (Raleigh: 1930), p. 258. The Pastor making the comment was E. W. Caruthers.

17. Prof. A. L. Graebner, "Three Centuries of American Lutheranism," *The Lutheran Witness*, XXXVI:21, (St. Louis: October 16, 1917), p. 328, hereinafter referenced *TLW*.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 329.

19. *S. C. Department of Archives and History Alphabetical Index*, hereinafter referenced *SC Index*. William Richard Fritz, "G. D. Bernheim, Historiographer of Southern Lutheranism," *The Lutheran Historical Conference, Essays and Reports, 1978*, (Lutheran Historical Conference: 1979), pp. 15, 17, with the information about Geissendanner cited from H. G. Anderson, "The European Phase of John Ulrich Geissendanner's Life," *S. C. Historical Magazine*, XVII:3, (July 1966).

20. Presslar, p. 90, and many other sources.

21. The History of the Synod Committee, *A History of the Lutheran Church in South Carolina*, (Columbia, SC, 1971), pp. 34, 79-82, partially excerpted from William B. Sprague's, *Annals of the American Lutheran Pulpit*, (New York: Robert Carter & Bros., 1869), pp. 33-37; and Julian Stevenson Bolick, *A Fairfield Sketchbook*, (Clinton, S. C.: Jacobs Bros., 1963), p. 6; hereinafter referenced *SC Synod History*. The quote about Martin being self-taught, or "autodidact," was taken from the Muhlenberg Journals, and Muhlenberg often made less than complimentary remarks about pastors who were not members of the Pennsylvania Synod or sent by the Halle Society. Clara A. Langley, *South Carolina Deed Abstracts, 1719-1772*, Vol. III, (Southern Historical Press, Easley, SC: 1983), pp. 188, 245. A Reformed Rev. James Martin was found in Pennsylvania in the mid-1770's, as cited by Rev. Robert Latham, D. D., in *History of the Associate Reformed Synod of the*

It is quite possible that these five South Carolina Pastors and others served the early North Carolina congregations as itinerants, as there are many later connections between the two geographical areas.²²

A Presbyterian, Pastor Alexander Craighead, who preached in the Rocky River and Sugar Creek settlements of Anson (later Mecklenburg/Cabarrus) County, moved from Virginia to North Carolina by 1758. He visited the area west of the Catawba River, but there is no knowledge of pastoral service, and little reason to suspect he did much preaching to the German-speaking settlers; however, he could have performed marriages and baptized their children in a strange tongue.²³

Understanding some of the earliest Protestant persuasions in the area requires examination into the religious background of the pioneers. While Lutheran and German Reformed were the faiths of a great majority of the German-speaking settlements in Pennsylvania and Maryland, there were also the "third Reformation" denominations, which included the Anabaptists or German Baptist's -- called Mennonites, Dunkers (preferably called "Brethren"), and Amish. Another Baptist group separated from the Dunkers, and formed a commune in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, known as the Ephrata Cloister. They were often phrased as "Seven Day Baptists," "Sabbatarian Dunkers," or "Siebentaufern," as they worshipped on the Sabbath, maintained a somewhat secluded existence, and held to other distinctive rituals. They also encouraged celibacy, which practice may have found its way into North Carolina during the earliest settlements, and is probably the reason for Woodmason's mention of this behavior.²⁴

The Moravians also were highly visible in Pennsylvania, and undertook a significant evangelical movement in the 1740's through the ordination of several Lutheran and Reformed pastors, who were sent out as missionaries in Pennsylvania and neighboring states. The Moravians did not emphasize doctrinal distinctions, and openly solicited the Lutherans, German Reformeds, and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the Baptist groups and independents into the "Brethren," the "Unitas Fratrum," or "Church of God in the Spirit," as it was alternatively labeled. They were also called the "Herrnhuters," named for the estate of one of their leaders, Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, who allowed the Moravians and others to escape persecution by refuge on Herrnhut (meaning "Lord's House"). The Moravian movement was somewhat balanced (or confronted directly) by the arrival of several Lutheran and Reformed pastors from Europe, and the eventual formation of the German Reformed Coetus and the Lutheran Synod. Other minor German-speaking religious congregations, groups, or meetings in Pennsylvania ranged from a few Roman Catholics to Schwenkfelders, "the New Born," the "Inspired," the "Skipack Brethren," and several other separatist meetings.²⁵

The area around Muddy Creek, in Cocalico Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and neighboring areas, was the former location of several of the earliest German-speaking pioneers west of the Catawba. From this small community, one observes a motley mixture of Protestantism. There were congregations of Lutherans, Reformeds, and Moravians, plus Mennonites, Dunkers, Amish, and other sectarians. There was a variety of English-speaking religious influences also. Muddy Creek was also the home of the Ephrata Cloister, where Heinrich Weidner's family lived.²⁶

One of South Fork's early pioneers, who was a recognized congregational leader near Muddy Creek, was Johannes (or Hans) Zimmerman, who relocated to the Beaver Dam Creek area [now Gaston County] on the South

South, to which is Prefixed A History of the Associate Presbyterian and Reformed Presbyterian Churches, (Harrisburg, PA: 1882), p.

166. The years do not match the 1759 listing of Martin at St. Paul's, and this Rev. Martin was Scots-Irish, which also does not seem likely, but he is listed as a Reformed Presbyterian. While it is somewhat suspicious that Martin was a Lutheran from Switzerland, Muhlenberg recognized him as one in 1774.

22. Rev. Samuel Burgell is reported to have preached to the Haw River Lutherans as early as 1755, when he moved to the New River area in Virginia. Eisenberg, p. 111. Morgan, p. 20. A document confirming Burgell's presence in North Carolina has not been located by this author, although he is cited in several histories. CR 5:1219-1224.

23. D. A. Tompkins, *History of Mecklenburg County and the City of Charlotte*, (Charlotte: Observer Printing House, 1903), pp. 75-76. MCNC Surveys lists survey no. 477 on Long Creek ordered for Craighead in 1765. He died in 1766, before a grant or patent was issued. Craighead is also described as a follower of George Whitefield's revivalist movement, which was also sometimes described as the "new lights."

24. Gladfelter's *Pastors and People*, Vol. II, gives an interesting narrative of several of the minor sects, and describes the Moravian movement and the Lutheran and German Reformed reaction.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.* Anne McAllister in *Through Four Generations* describes the life of Heinrich Weidner's family in Ephrata Cloister on pages 28-32.

Fork in the early 1750's, and became one of the patriarchs of the local Carpenter family. Zimmerman was the High Priest of a sect called the "New Lights" or "New Mooners," as their special day of worship was the first Sunday after the new moon. This practice was "as the Lord saith unto Moses" in Numbers 28-29. Other Old Testament passages verify that the Children of Israel followed this command, and routinely offered sacrifices with special ceremonies at the beginning of the month, or during the new moon. The New Mooner views of the hereafter were somewhat removed from mainstream Protestantism, as

... the spirits of the departed were wafted into space and there separated, i. e., the good from the bad. These souls were disposed of four times every month. In the growing moon when the horns were up, forming a boat as it were, the souls of the good went aboard and were thus carried into the realms of everlasting bliss. Upon the two last of the monthly trips, when the moon was in its third and last quarter, the souls of the wicked were gathered upon the now convex side, and the spirits not being able to maintain any foothold would slide off into space and thus fall into the bottomless pit, where there was the rattling of dry bones and the gnashing of teeth.²⁷

As a part of their worship, they utilized brass instruments, based upon scriptural reference, and organized many aspects of their daily lives according to the lunar cycle. Some of these customs may still be seen. The Moravian Church officially adopted the use of a brass ensemble at funeral services in 1764, and this ritual continues in North Carolina.²⁸ Also, the farmers of the area carried some of the daily customs into the present generation, as many sow their crops or plant their gardens "according to the signs" of the lunar cycle, as charted in the yearly almanacs found in every agrarian household.

Zimmerman also maintained a cordial relationship with the Moravian Bishop Spangenberg, who "preached to an audience of 'bearded men'--Mennonites, Dunkers and seceders from the Mennonites," at a meeting held in Zimmerman's house in Pennsylvania. Some Pennsylvania researchers have concluded that "the sect ceased to be a distinctive body. The members were rapidly absorbed by other faiths, and the New Mooners soon passed into history."²⁹ Rather, the New Mooners passed into the Carolinas, as the Zimmerman family arrived in North Carolina with their associates at about the same time as Bishop Spangenberg's land expedition for the Moravians.

Zimmerman's religious leadership is not recorded locally. If he were from the Anabaptist influence, this is not surprising, as they maintained and preserved few congregational records in Pennsylvania. Anabaptists normally did not construct churches or meeting houses, but conducted their worship and devotions in various houses, barns, or outdoors. They were highly involved in the pietistic religious trend of the era, and can be characterized by their plain and humble attire and life-style, nearly to the point of self-denial. Like the Quakers and Moravians, the Anabaptist doctrine precluded its members from civil affairs, including bearing arms in military service, taking oaths, sitting on juries, or holding public office.³⁰

There were several other Anabaptists, who were local Pastors, congregational leaders, or Elders, as they were often called.³¹

The area of Killian's Creek, in today's east Lincoln, was an area of strong early Anabaptist influence, as suggested by the presence of Dunker Elders George Brown and his brother Jacob by the year 1754. Neither remained for very long, as by 1756, George returned to Pennsylvania where he was later listed as an "exhorter" to

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27. Julius Friedrich Sachse, *The German Sectarians of Pennsylvania, 1708-1742, A Critical and Legendary History of the Ephrata Cloister and the Dunkers*, (Philadelphia: 1899), pp. 430-432. See also Robert C. Carpenter, *Carpenters A Plenty*, (Gateway Press, Baltimore, MD: 1982), for more information on Hans Zimmerman. At the time of printing Carpenter was not aware of the involvement of Hans Zimmerman with the New Mooner sect.
 28. Sachse, pp. 430-432. Adelaide L. Fries, *Distinctive Customs and Practices of the Moravian Church*, (Commenius Press, Bethlehem, PA, and Winston-Salem, NC: 1949), pp. 50-51.
 29. Sachse, cited above. Jakob Ammann was the founder of the Amish denomination in Switzerland. It was a division from the Mennonites. Ammann taught that "it was wrong to trim the beard," among other things, such as footwashing at communion, etc.
 30. Gladfelter, Vol. II, p. 146, as cited from a lengthy list of authorities. The Province of North Carolina regularly exempted the Quakers, Mennonites, Moravians, and Dunkers from the military service during the Revolution, and instituted triple taxation. See CR index under "Dunker" or "Dunkard."
 31. John Scott Davenport, "The Brethren in North Carolina During the Revolution," *Brethren Life and Thought*, (CXII:1, Winter 1977), pp. 25-32.

his congregation, and Jacob removed to Crane Creek in Rowan County, where another possible Dunker settlement was being established.

Two Brethren Elders soon followed the Browns. On a letter dated February 12, 1750, their names appear on a ban (excommunication) of a fellow Elder in Pennsylvania, for joining the Moravians. Elder Christopher Guice (Güsz/Gusz/Guss/etc.) appears in Killian's settlement by 1755, and can be found named in civil records until 1768. A second Elder, Philip Earhart, with his brothers Abraham and Jacob, were in this same neighborhood by the late 1750's.³² The Earharts and Guise all owned property adjoining each other or in close proximity, and one could easily conclude that some of their neighbors may have also been Brethren. By 1770, a meeting house had been constructed on the land next to the tract once owned by Guice.³³ This is the meeting house that later became known as "Killian settlement."

The presence of Heinrich Weidner and his brother Michael adds their sectarian "Seventh Day Baptists" beliefs from the Ephrata Cloister to these earliest settlers.

The possibility of two or more Dunker Elders in Killian's settlement, the Weidners, and the presence of High Priest Zimmerman on Beaver Dam Creek, provides strong support that the first wave of German settlement brought a significant Anabaptist influence with it -- and several religious leaders to promote it. While proven Pennsylvanian Lutheran, Reformed, and Moravian pioneers were included in the first wave of settlement west of the Catawba, no resident pastor has been discovered in their midst. The first wave abruptly concluded when the Cherokee Indians began to violently harass the frontier settlers prior to 1759.³⁴

As area settlers were forced to flee for their own safety, several relocated to South Carolina. The German religious story of the Catawba pioneers also crosses the State line. What Reformed Pastor Theus, Lutheran Pastor Martin, and Anglican Pastor Woodmason found in the South Carolina backcountry was an emotional religious movement that eventually resulted in tragedy. Muhlenberg gave a chilling account of this series of events, as related to him over a decade later by Theus, Martin, and Martin's son-in-law, all of whom lived nearby. Woodmason's account was written in 1765, which was just a few years after the events. Some of these reports are not consistent with other sources, and may reflect either the passion of the writer, the faulty recollection of informants, or the exaggeration of legends. Nevertheless, when coupled with other sources of current information, a reasonably accurate portrayal of the events seems possible.

Due to shortage of German-speaking pastors in the settlements along the Congaree, Broad, and Saluda Rivers, in about 1759, a "pernicious sect" arose near Fort Saluda, with its leader being a prosperous citizen, Jacob Wäber, also seen as "Weber" -- a "very pious man." His friends and neighbors began to recognize his admirable Christian traits, and Wäber's respect grew to the point that he gathered them together, they sang hymns, and he read sermons to them. This was entirely proper and commendable. However, the admiration exalted Wäber's ego, and he soon began to compose his own sermons, which intrigued his growing audience even more. Two colleagues began to notice the actions of Wäber, envied his popularity, and united with him in his distracted direction. Human vanity began to creep into these lay-preachers, until they ignored their formerly conservative piety, and exaggerated their self-importance. Eventually, Wäber claimed to be God the Father; his associate and alleged co-founder, Captain John George SchmidtPeter, claimed to be "the Son," and to be saved, one must believe in him; a third leader, named Dauber, described by Muhlenberg as "a godless colored preacher," portrayed the Holy Ghost; and Wäber's wife Hannah acted the part of the Virgin Mary. When this drama reached the people, the emotional excitement grew.³⁵

The moral and social depravations are cited in every known source of information about the "Weberites." Muhlenberg described that "groups of both sexes went about unclothed and naked, and practiced the most abominable wantonness."³⁶ Woodmason related another strange occurrence:

32. *Ibid.*, Morgan Edwards, *Materials towards a History of the Baptists*, Vol. II, (Heritage Papers, Danielsville, GA: ???), p. 66.

33. Hofmann, *NC Land Patents*, Vol. 2, 20:529 (#2328), 23:196 (#6443), pp. 178, 484.; Holcombe, *MC NC Deeds*, p. 77; Eaker, p. 154.

34. See Rolland, "From the Rhine to the Catawba . . .", Chapter 4 and 5 for a thorough discussion of the role of sectarian migration west of the Catawba. The St. John's History supports Ms. Rolland's conclusions concerning the role of sectarians in the earliest settlements.

35. *MJ*, II:577. The word "colored" probably does not refer to skin color, and may be an improperly selected word during translation to English. The German word "gefärbt," which means "colored," also could be translated as "colorful," "dye," or "biased." All accounts describe this sect as German, and it seems quite remote that there was a black German pastor. Letter from William Bull to William Pitt, Esq., British Provincial Records Office, America & W. Indies, Vol. 73, 26 April 1761, hereinafter cited *Bull Letter*.

36. *MJ*, II:578.

One of their Teachers pretended to work Miracles, and declared that He had Power equal to *Christ*, and that *God* had given Him Authority even to raise the Dead. . . . So one of his fraternity was procur'd, and properly tutored to counterfeit Himself Dead, and to revive on certain Prayers and Breathings being utter'd over Him. Accordingly this abominable farce was play'd.³⁷

Eventually, the neighbors joined into these activities because "they feared for the safety of their lives." When the "upright Reformed preacher," Christian Theus, appeared at one of their gatherings, "God the Son" challenged him, "Do you believe that I am the redeemer and savior of the world and that no man can be saved without me"? The "Father" and the "Holy Ghost" taunted Theus similarly. Theus's forceful reply was considered blasphemy, and his verdict was guilty and punishable by death. As the crowd became boisterous and sought to carry out the sentence by either hanging or drowning, Theus wisely fled to the Broad River, and was transported by boat to safety.³⁸

Eventually, the three leaders came into conflict. Muhlenberg wrote that "the Father" and "the Son" first became disaffected with "the Holy Ghost," and a group of their followers had Dauber killed. This disagrees with contemporary newspaper accounts, naming the deceased as Michael Hans [Hanes]. If so, what happened to "the Holy Ghost"? Then, Wäber and SchmidtPeter began to quarrel, until Wäber accused him of being "the dragon" or "the old serpent" [the Devil] and proclaimed to the people, that "unless he was put to death, the World could not be saved." The "deluded people" attacked SchmidtPeter, and "with all the rage of religious persecution beat him to death without remorse." The crimes occurred on February 23 and 24, 1761.³⁹

The militia was dispatched and seven were delivered to the Charleston jail and indicted. The prisoners openly admitted to the crimes, and "for some days attempted to justify themselves."⁴⁰ Woodmason remembered, "not all the Expostulations, Reasonings and Remonstrances of our Gentry and Clergy could make any Impression on their Diabolical Minds, or bring them back to Reason or Reflection."⁴¹ When the cases were heard by the March Session of Court in Charleston, the convicted parties had recognized their error. The Court found three to be not guilty, but found Jacob Wäber, Hannah Wäber, John Geiger, and Jacob Bourghart guilty of murder, and sentenced each of them to be "hanged by the neck until his body was dead."⁴²

On April 15, two days prior to execution, Lt. Gov. William Bull issued a stay of execution for all except Jacob Wäber. Bourghart was selected to hang Wäber, if another could not be found to perform the service. Bull then issued a formal appeal for pardon to Secretary of State, William Pitt, Esq.. He felt that the three had previously been good citizens, they had been unduly influenced by Wäber, and that on behalf of their families, they should be spared. The Secretary agreed, and three were pardoned, but remained in the Charleston jail for several months awaiting this decision.⁴³

The day before Wäber was to climb the steps of the gallows, he wrote a memoir for his children, in which he reflected on his original Christian inspiration that encouraged him to preach, and the foolish pride that contributed to his downfall.

The Spirit of God is bearing witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. . . . I therefore commend you to the mercy and protection of God! Pray without ceasing, learn and read God's Word, do no intentional harm to anyone while you live, and with all your powers be industrious and faithful in your work; then, if you do not see me again in this world, we may hope to see each other in heaven, in the world

37. Hooker, pp. 78-80.

38. *MJ*, II:578. This, plus land records of Jacob Wäber and others, place the sect between the Broad and Saluda Rivers in current Newberry County, and not far from Columbia.

39. *Ibid.* Bull Letter. *SC Gazette*, 18-25 April 1761. Bernheim, pp. 203-204, includes the following, as cited from Dr. Hazelius' History: ". . . Satan should be chained in a subterranean hole, and finally that he should be destroyed. For this purpose they met, placed the unfortunate man in a bed, covered him with pillows, on which some seated themselves, while others stamped with their feet on the bed until the life of the man had become extinct. The corpse was then taken out of bed, and thrown into a burning pile of wood, to be consumed to ashes." Muhlenberg describes the events in the ground as the execution of the "Holy Ghost," and does not mention the burning.

40. *SC Gazette*, cited above.

41. Hooker, p. 78.

42. *Charleston Court Records*, Book 86B, p. 607, 15 April 1761, microfilm SC.C/C.3Fm.57, viewed at Old Salem Archives.

43. *Ibid.* Bull Letter.

to come. . . . May God protect and preserve all men from so great a fall and trample Satan under foot, for Christ's sake. Amen. . . . May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you and all men. Amen.⁴⁴

So serious was Wäber's personal reflection, that, on the day of his execution, he made a solemn address to the public on the dangers of pride and offered words of prayer. The pastors in Charleston, the Justice who presided over his trial, and the public at large believed he died a saved man. Most readers of his memoir would certainly agree, and it must have touched Pastor Muhlenberg, as he obtained Wäber's original letter and saved it for posterity.⁴⁵

The English people made great sport of the Germans throughout this unfortunate affair. The Devil of "these ignorant Germans" and "unhappy wretches" had been killed, and their God had now been publicly executed.⁴⁶ Rumors persisted and circulated widely that Jacob Wäber would rise again on the third day.⁴⁷

Woodmason sent a report to his superiors in the Church of England in 1765:

Africk never more abounded with New Monsters, than Pennsylvania does with New Sects, who are continually sending out their Emissaries around. One of these Parties, known by the Title of *New Lights* or the *Gifted Brethren* (for they pretend to Inspiration) now infest the whole Back Country, and have even penetrated South Carolina.⁴⁸

While Woodmason could have erred in his appellation of the "Weberites," he otherwise seemed very astute in his recognition of various non-Anglican religious groups. He clearly states that this was the work of the "New Lights," which had also been called the "New Mooners," and that the remainder of the convicted persons were "banished the Province." Whereas Woodmason believed the sect moved from the north to South Carolina, Muhlenberg felt it spread from South to North Carolina, and then, to other states.⁴⁹

When the struggle with the Cherokees was resolved, white settlers began to re-populate the North Carolina area west of the Catawba by 1762, with noticeable movement by 1764. This was the beginning of the second wave of German settlement, and as it developed through the 1770's, quite a different religious perspective emerged.

As many settlers did, Dunker Elders Guice and Earhart fled the area during the Cherokee raids of 1759, but returned about 1762. By 1768, Guice sold his land and had moved. From land records, Philip Earhart appears to have moved, but was back in this area for a few years by 1789. Neither proved to be a long-term religious leader in Killian's settlement, although a probable brother of Earhart's, named Abraham, is reported to have served as Elder at one time, married into the nearby Forney family, and lived in the area until his death after the turn of the century. By 1766, the younger Earhart was listed on a land record as a blacksmith, which was the trade of his father-in-law, but this would not have precluded the possibility of his leadership in local worship services, or his preaching.⁵⁰

The removal of Guice and Philip Earhart may have been encouraged by the arrival of Elder Lemuel Sanders (sometimes confused with "Samuel Sanders" in transcriptions), by 1767, or possibly when Sanders purchased land next to Earhart in 1772. If Sanders fully subscribed to the doctrines of the Dunker faith, it is curious that he

44. *MJ*, II:578-580.

45. *Ibid.* Fries, I:238, entry for 2 November 1761. *SC Gazette*, cited above.

46. *Bull Letter*. *SC Gazette*, cited above. *MJ* II:578.

47. Thomas H. Pope, *The History of Newberry County, South Carolina*, Vol. I: 1749-1860, (Columbia: USC Press, 1973), p. 88; cited from *The Journals and Letters of Francis Asbury*, (Nashville, TN: 1958), 3 vols, I:507. This account was based on oral history of the area in about 1790, and displays how the murders grew from two persons to three.

48. Hooker, p. 78. The term "New Lights" is also given to the followers of Anglican evangelist George Whitefield, who promoted revivalist gatherings in the middle 1700s. It is doubtful that Whitefield had much influence on the early German-speaking settlers in North and South Carolina.

49. *Ibid.* *MJ* II:578. There is no evidence whatsoever that Hans Zimmerman or others from North Carolina were involved in the "Weberite" movement. Also, it does not appear that participants to the crimes were banished from SC -- at least not permanently. Later land records appear for John Geiger, Jacob Burkhart, and Hannah Weaver. While the Muhlenberg and Woodmason accounts differ on several points of detail, they are obviously referring to the same crime(s), imprisonment, and execution.

50. Davenport, cited above. References from Hofmann's *Land Patents*, Holcombe's *Mecklenburg County Deeds*, and Eaker's *German Settlers*, verify Davenport's dates through land transactions.

proved a legal document in open court as early as 1767, served other civil functions, and was active in the upcoming Revolutionary War. Sanders appears to be an English Baptist and later served Long Creek in present Gaston County.⁵¹

Several German Reformed histories list a Rev. Du Pert or Richard DuPert as an early pastor of the area, and who was preaching at South Fork as early as 1764.⁵² South Carolina Lutheran and Presbyterian histories cite a William Dubard as preaching in the Dutch Fork area near the Broad River in the 1770's and 1780's, and suggest his affiliation as German Reformed.⁵³ Neither of these names, nor denominational sanction, can be found in a contemporary record. The Reformed archives in Pennsylvania cannot substantiate his ordination, but one of their nineteenth century histories lists a similar surname, without first name, as being recognized by the Conference of 1764.⁵⁴ Authority for this citation is presently unknown to that archives and to this author, but a legal ordination could have occurred. The name in these various histories should be **Rev. John Frederick Doubber**, as is easily proven by civil records in both Carolinas. He is the first proven resident pastor west of the Catawba, who was legally recognized by the title of Reverend or Minister.

Rev. John Frederick Doubber appears on a land survey request, west of the Catawba River, in the year 1765.⁵⁵ He had moved to Beaver Dam Creek in current Gaston County, and by 1769, had obtained about 900 acres of land joining Peter and Christian Eaker, Christian Carpenter, Henry Izenhardt, and near the Kisers, Beateys, and other early pioneer families.⁵⁶ One of his first recorded associations appears in the Salisbury District Court, when he and John Carpenter (High Priest Hans Zimmerman) were summoned as witnesses in a legal case.⁵⁷ While there were other Protestant denominations represented along Beaver Dam Creek, Doubber's relationship to Zimmerman raises the question as to his denominational affiliation. Research by Gaston County historian, Robert C. Carpenter, indicates that Doubber's neighbors along the Beaver Dam Creek area were a majority of German Reformeds, with a mixture of Lutherans, Mennonites, and others, but that this first generation in North Carolina is difficult to determine due to absence of reliably recorded church histories.⁵⁸

John Frederick Doubber was born approximately 1726, and possibly arrived on an unnamed ship in Philadelphia on October 20, 1747, where he signed as "Friederich Dauber." Wilhelm Dauber and Hans Michael Kline were also on this ship.⁵⁹ Wilhelm Dauber, who was probably a close relation, was from Baumholder in the

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51. *Ibid.* Phillip Aaronhart, Sen., Phillip Aaronhart, Jr., and George Aronhart were listed on a 1778 Rowan County Tax List as being assessed four fold taxes, suggesting they were conscientious objectors (or Loyalists) during the Revolutionary War. Refusal to bear arms is consistent with the Brethren faith. Their family connection to the Earharts on Killian's Creek is not proven however.
 52. G. William Welcher, *CR*, VIII:732. Note that there was no church named "St. Paul's" in today's Catawba County, in the year 1764; however, the "South Fork Meeting House" may have been in existence. Edward Tanjore Corwin, D. D., *A Memorial of the Reformed Church in America - 1628-1878*, (Reformed Church of America; New York: 1879.), pp. 250, 658. Presslar lists a Richard DuPert in 1764. (p. 90).
 53. *SC Synod History*, pp. 141-142. George Howe, D. D., *History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina*, Vol. I, (Columbia, Duffie & Chapman: 1870), repr. 1965, pp. 415, 494, as cited from *Mills' Statistics*. This is also mentioned in Bernheim and other histories, none of which prove the name "Richard DePert" or "William Dubard."
 54. Corwin, cited above. A letter from the author to the Reformed Archives in PA resulted in no additional information.
 55. Miles S. Philbeck, *Mecklenburg County North Carolina Index to Land Surveys 1763-1768*, (Chapel Hill, 1988), survey number 478, hereinafter cited *MCNC Surveys*.
 56. *Ibid.*, survey number 774. Miles S. Philbeck, *Mecklenburg County North Carolina Land Warrants 1765-1768*, (Chapel Hill: 1989), warrant numbers 565, 1284, hereinafter referenced *MCNC Warrants*. Hofmann, Vol. II, pp. 423, 486 (Tryon Grant Bk 23, pp. 32, 199), p. 330; Also, (Grant Bk 22, p. 4370). Robert C. Carpenter, *The History of Bethel Lutheran Church*, (Gastonia, NC: 1993), pp. 5-6. Roy Brooks, transcr., "Tryon County Minutes of Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions," in *Bulletin of the Genealogical Society of Old Tryon County, Inc.*, Vol. IV, No. 1, (Spindale, NC: Feb. 1976), p. 36.
 57. Lorena Shell Eaker, *The Shoe Cobbler's Kin, Genealogy of the Peter (Ecker) Eaker, Sr. Family*, Vol. II, (SCK Publishing, Church Hill, TN: 1985), p. 1003.
 58. Robert C. Carpenter, "John Frederick Doubber Neighbors", typescript, April 1995 held in the files of the author.
 59. Ralph Beaver Strassburger, L. L. D. William John Hinke, PhD. D. D., Ed., *Pennsylvania German Pioneers*, Vol. I, (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1966), pp. 369-370. Date of birth was calculated from death record, cited later. A Hans Michael Cline, perhaps not the same, was brother to Lyle's and Clark's Creek landowner, Sebastian Cline.

Rhenish Palatinate.⁶⁰ although family historians believe Doubber was originally from Switzerland⁶¹ His exact origin is therefore not proven.

By 1758, a land survey was approved for John Frederick "Dubber," on Stephens Creek of the Savannah River, near the German "Hard Labor" settlement of South Carolina. In January of 1761, he received the grant for two hundred acres.⁶² This was during the period when there was much trouble with the Indians west of the Catawba, and South Carolina was having its trouble with the "Weberites."

Doubber's relocation to Beaver Dam Creek was in the neighborhood of a meeting house near Paysour's Mountain. Historians cite that this building burned during the Revolution.⁶³ Doubber probably preached in this meeting house on a regular basis, and may have organized the congregation, if the Zimmermans and their neighbors had not already done so.

But of particular interest to St. John's are the tracts of land Doubber acquired in today's Catawba County. In 1767, he obtained 136 acres on Clark's Creek joining John Anderson, Peter Ikers, and John Thomason. This appears to be in the area near the current Town of Maiden. In 1768, he acquired an additional 72 acres along Clark's Creek, and joining Nicholas Fry's corner, Barnet Stephens', Conrad Minges', George Pope's, and Matthias Barringer's line. This last property is definitely in today's Catawba County and is in or near the present City of Newton. Matthias Barringer and George Pope requested a survey for a tract of land with a "School-House" already constructed on it in the same year, and Doubber's land joined this tract.⁶⁴ In 1769, "Rev. John Frederick Doubber" purchased 300 additional acres on Beaver Dam Creek, which is further evidence that he was recognized as a Pastor by the legal system, and there remains no question that he was an affluent resident, as by that time, he owned about 1200 acres of land, and none was sold for some time.⁶⁵

But where did Doubber live? The *Colonial Record* states that "Richard Du Pert" lived near Paysouer's Mill, which was on Beaver Dam Creek, and a later land transaction describes "Tuppert's old improvement" at that location. Yet another deed from "John Frederick Dubbers of S. C. of the Dist. of Camden, *Minister of the Gospel*," was made to speculator John Beeman of Rowan County. This land later was sold by Beeman, and the deed included "the improvements," suggesting a structure of some kind at this location also.⁶⁶

Doubber was shrewd in his land acquisitions. At the time of his "claims," there were five verifiable German-speaking local assembly buildings west of the Catawba River -- the meeting house at Paysour's Mountain, the "School House" west of current Lincolnton, the Barringer/Pope "School House" near current Newton, the meeting house in Killian's settlement, and at Adam Kastner's in today's Gaston County.⁶⁷ Doubber's land

60. Carl Boyer, 3rd, *Ship Passenger Lists, Pennsylvania and Delaware (1641-1825)*, (Newhall, CA: 1980), p. 165. This village was about 6 miles south of Idar-Oberstein, west of Heidelberg, and north of Strasbourg. "William" was the name of Douber's oldest son, born in 1765, probably in North Carolina.

61. Memory Aldridge Lester, *Old Southern Bible Records*, (Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore: 1974), p. 111. This source lists the William Dubard of the South Carolina histories as the son of John Frederick "DuBard," but does not include the source of information. That Doubber often associated with Swiss immigrants, Buchalter, Faust, Geiger, etc., in SC; Zimmerman, Eaker, etc., in NC; suggests that he may have been of Swiss origin.

62. Brent W. Holcombe, *South Carolino Deed Abstracts, 1773-1778, Book F4-X4*, (SCMAR, Columbia, SC: 1993), p. 72. This is not far from North Augusta, SC.

63. Welcher, CR, VIII:732, 750-756.

64. *MCNC Surveys*, nos. 1767, 1768. *MCNC Warrants*, nos. 402, 566. Hofmann, Vol. II, pp. 423, 486. James W. Miller, Jr., "Burke County Land Entries in the Newton Area of Present Day Catawba County, N. C.", April 1987, and published in *Catawba Cousins*. The School House Tract is located on this map.

65. Brent H. Holcomb, *Deed Abstracts of Tryon, Lincoln, & Rutherford Counties, North Carolino, 1769-1786; Tryon County Wills & Estates*, (Columbia: SCMAR, 1994), p. 15. Deed is listed in TCRD 1:195-196.

66. Welcher, CR, VIII:751. Anne W. McAllister and Kathy Gunter Sullivan, *Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Lincoln County, North Carolino, 1789 April - 1796 April*, (1987, repr. 1990), p. 114. Dr. A. B. Pruitt, *Abstracts of Land Entries, Lincoln County, NC, 1783-1795*, (1987), p. 94, entry number 361.

67. Four of the five listed meeting houses are supported by various land records. The Adam Kastner marble slab dated 1767 supports that date for organization of the Kastner's congregation which became Philadelphia Lutheran Church, near Dallas. Unfortunately other contemporary sources fail to date this congregation to 1767. This author has found no documentation to support the presence of "Saut Fark," or Old St. Paul's, until the date of the deed in 1771.

holdings were very near two of these properties, and were not over one-half day's ride on horseback from the remainder.

Doubber's ministry is not known to have been preserved through the writings of himself or others; however, Doubber's land on Clark's Creek certainly offered the convenient opportunity for his preaching and teaching in the school house owned by Barringer and Pope.

A second early School Master might have been George Hefner, who owned land from 1768 through 1770 near current Maiden, next to Frederick Markle and John Alexander, and not far from Doubber. Apparently by 1771, Hefner had relocated.⁶⁸ One of Hefner's later neighbors on Long Branch was named Jacob Weber, who was also a German-speaking School Master. Weber also owned land near Jacob's Fork and on Anthony's Mill Creek (near today's Newton) upon his death in 1789.⁶⁹

In 1772, the school house land was sold to Phillip Heinrich Grider, a school master. Grider soon sold the same land to a group of area residents, including Henry Bullinger, Nicholas Fry, Peter Eigert, John Shuford, Martin Colter, Frederick Markle, Michael Grindstaff, William Deal, and John Deal, to be set apart "for a school house for use of the public," and including the school house for a meeting house, which is **NOT** the meeting house that became Old St. Paul's.⁷⁰ This deed looks suspiciously like a Church Council, as well as a group of civic-minded citizens. The deeds were executed during a period that the Royal Governor was exerting pressure to bring the religion in North Carolina under the control of the Anglican Church; therefore, it might not have won much favor to name non-Anglican religions on a legal land transaction, although South Fork had done it a year before.⁷¹

By December of 1772, Doubber moved to South Carolina, and by 1773, he had purchased another plantation. For the next few years, there were ample civil records to prove that Doubber had moved south, as he witnessed several deeds and wills in the area of Cedar Creek, and was included on a Jury List between the Broad and the Catawba Rivers.⁷²

Various South Carolina church histories offer many conflicts as to which pastors were serving congregations at Amelia, Cedar Creek (St. Paul), and Cedar Creek (Appii Forum). The names most often seen are Lutheran John Nicolaus Martin, Lutheran John George Friedrichs, and Reformed William Dubard. These names and dates are certainly arguable, and some appear impossible, when compared to civil records. Martin owned land in up-country South Carolina a few miles away from Doubber's later residence as early as 1762, and alternated between Charleston and the backcountry for many years.⁷³ The Pastor named "Dubard" was undoubtedly John Frederick Doubber, probably serving the Reformed congregations, a minority group, or other churches entirely. No other

68. Philbeck, *TCNC Deeds*, p. 20; Hofmann, *NC Land Warrants*, Vol. II, 23:329 (#7016), p. 527. The Habner/Hefner Land Grant was not over one mile from Doubber's tract near Maiden. Johann Friederick Tauber and George Hafener (school master), witnessed the same wedding in Philadelphia Lutheran Church in 1757, and became neighbors in Catawba County, NC. John "Sickman" witnessed "Hefner's" deed of sale of his land, and other Sigmans and Hefners lived side by side on Lyle's Creek. There must be a connection to St. John's and the school house here somewhere.

69. Eaker, p. 461.

70. Brent Holcomb, *Tryon County, North Carolina, Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, 1769-1779*, (Columbia: SCMAR, 1994), p. 52.

71. Other meeting houses had preferred the label of "school house" or had not named any denomination on prior deeds. Both deeds, for the School House and South Fork, were registered in Old Tryon County, yet both tracts were located in Rowan. Possibly this was to avoid scrutiny by the Anglican Parish Vestry (or its Pastor) of Rowan County.

72. Gelee Corley Hendrix and Mom McKay Lindsay, *The Jury Lists of South Carolina, 1778-1779*, (Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., Baltimore: 1980), p. 52. No other person of similar surname is listed in the Dutch Fork area. Caroline T. Moore, *Abstract of the Wills of the State of South Carolina 1760-1784*, (1979), pp. 194, 296. Jane Revill, *Some South Carolina Genealogical Records*, (Southern Historical Press, Easley, SC: 1986), p. 196. Most or all of citations from these two sources occur in the Broad or Saluda River areas. *S. C. Department of Archives and History Alphabetical Index*, hereinafter referenced *SC Index*, which mentions Doubber on a land transaction near Cedar Creek of the Broad River on 18 Dec. 1772, just a few months after sale of the School House property to Grider [SC Index no. 0030 002 012 00045 06.].

73. See SC Synod History, Bernheim, and Howe, cited above. The listing for William Dubard serving Appii Forum until 1791 is impossible, as John Frederick Doubber was dead by then, and a William Dubard (his son) did not move back until after the 1790 Census.

"Pastor" or "Rev.," of similar surname, can be found in this locale during this period of time, and Doubber is possibly the Rev. "Dubard" who is often credited with organizing the Appii Forum Church on Cedar Creek.⁷⁴

Richland County historians state that members of the "Weberites" moved to the east of the Broad River and founded Appii Forum Church just after the crimes of 1761. In 1787 or 1788, Appii Forum prepared a petition to the "Corpus Evangelicum," a group of Lutheran and Reformed congregations, which were gathered together by Rev. Frederick Dawser, to form a Conference. At the top of the petition was the name of John Geiger, the namesake of the convicted murderer, then pardoned, of the "Weberites."⁷⁵

It was during his tenure in the Dutch Forks that Doubber disposed of the Savannah River property obtained in 1761. He also sold portions of his North Carolina plantations; thereby, confirming him as one and the same person.⁷⁶

By 1781, John Frederick Doubber was serving the congregation of St. John's-Charleston, while the city was under British occupation. Pastor Martin, who was forced to flee inland rather than condescend to pray for the British soldiers, was replaced by Rev. Frederick Dawser. The records of St. John's-Charleston are unclear regarding Doubber's service, and there is no evidence that a formal call had been issued. Doubber's family had been driven from their home, as the activities of the Revolutionary War escalated through the inland areas of South Carolina. Although he was too old to be drafted into the military, it is possible that he was a Loyalist supporter, or refused to assist either side due to religious convictions, like so many Quakers, Moravians, Dunkers, and Mennonites. In either case, the British would have preferred him over Pastor Martin. John Frederick "Dubbert" died of smallpox on November 3, 1781, and was buried the next day in the cemetery of St. John's-Charleston. Presumably, Lutheran Pastor Frederick Dawser officiated his funeral, and entered the respectful title of "V. D. M." after his name in the Church's funeral records.⁷⁷

In September of 1782, Dawser appeared in a South Carolina court with Doubber's will. From this, it is clear that Dawser recognized him as a respected colleague of the cloth, and "a friend," as stated on the legal papers.⁷⁸ As the Charleston congregations seemed very conservative in selection of pastors, and heavily relied on those educated in Germany, Doubber's brief period of service to that congregation was quite an accomplishment, and adds great credibility to his reputation as a Pastor nearing the end of his career -- even under the circumstances of war.⁷⁹

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74. The family on Cedar Creek changed their name from Doubber to Dubard by the year 1800. Whether Doubber organized the congregation at Appii Forum is debatable, due to Martin's presence; however, Doubber and Martin both could have been preaching there.
75. *SC Synod History*, pp. 81, 141-142, 793. The portion which references the "Weberites" is cited from Edwin L. Green, *A History of Richland County*, (Columbia: The R. L. Bryan Co., 1932), p. 125. The two "Weberites" who crossed the River were named as Schmidt [Schmidt Peter] and Rubsman. Both Hans and Peet Repsommen received land grants on the north (east) side of the Broad River in 1753, and there are no land transactions known on the South(west) side of this river for them [*SC Index*]. Schmidt Peter was dead, so the two "Weberites" (if accurate at all) were more likely to have been John Geiger and another -- possibly Doubber or Jacob Bucher (?Bourghart?). Possibly Doubber was another of the Weberites. There were at least two John Geigers in South Carolina, with the other one living in Saxe Gotha; however, the John Geiger on Cedar Creek appears to be at least related. Regardless of this confusion, there are ample records to connect the Doubber family to several of the names on the petition: Gradick, Repsommen [Rubsman], Tumipseed, Lewe, and Hammiter. Son William "Dubard" married Elizabeth Hammiter. Three of William Dubard's children married Tumipseeds, formerly known as Repsommens. Also, from *SC Synod History* (pp. 28, 39), is stated that Herman Geiger, one of the early settlers by that surname in South Carolina, was from Toggenburg, Switzerland, and was German Reformed. He is also named as a member of Geissendanner's Congaree Congregation very early, suggesting Reformed.
76. Holcombe, *S. C. Deed Abstracts, 1773-1778*, p. 72, cited above, McAllister & Williams, *LCCP&Q*, cited above, LC RD 17:402.
77. Howe, I:722, states that "William Dubard" died of smallpox in Charleston near the end of the Revolution. No estate records were located for a William Dubard during this era. D. E. Huger Smith and A. S. Salley, Jr., *Register of St. Philips Parish, Charles Town, or Charleston, S. C., 1754-1810*, (USC Press, Columbia: 1971), p. 348, confirms the burial date, and describes "Dubbert" as "a refugee Clergyman." *St. John's Lutheran Church, Charleston, Church Register*, p. 239, microfilm seen at Old Salem Archives. These records are in German script, and the name could be found only upon his death, but there could be other entries that were not recognized. Sprague, *Annals*, pp. 35-37, describes Rev. Martin's problems with the British.
78. *Probate Records of South Carolino*, microfilm SC.C/3/MFm 96, p. 51. Brent H. Holcomb and Elmer O. Parker, *Camden District S. C. Wills and Administrations, 1781-1787*, (Southern Historical Press, Easley, SC: 1978), p. 61, with the name listed as Frederick Dubberts.
79. *MJ* cites several instances where this church strove for an educated and properly-ordained clergy, and often would extend temporary calls during vacancies.

In 1786, his daughter, Catherine "Dubbertin," married Carl Gross at St. John's-Charleston, and in 1800, Lutheran Pastor Faber officiated the marriage of Doubber's youngest daughter, Elizabeth, to Mr. J. J. Scroter. This plus Doubber's Lutheran funeral adds further confusion to his denominational affiliation. In 1792, his son, William "Dubard, from Charleston," married Elizabeth Hamiter, and returned to the Cedar Creek property.⁸⁰

By 1795, Doubber's estate was represented by his son, Philip "Dubert," on behalf of himself and his brothers, Godfrey and Frederick, as the latter two still lived in the Charleston area. The nine hundred acre plantation on Beaver Dam Creek was sold to a later Reformed pastor, Andrew Lorentz.⁸¹

Thus ends the current base of knowledge on one of the first resident pastors west of the Catawba River and one who died in service to one of the largest German Churches in the South. The family and neighborhood associations of Doubber during his career suggest his religious belief as Anabaptist, then Reformed, and finally Lutheran. One may never know for sure until further documentation reveals itself.

Just after Doubber arrived in North Carolina, the Germans who settled in the Haw River and Yadkin River Valleys also obtained services of a resident minister. Reformed Pastor Samuel Suther was born in Switzerland in 1722. His family immigrated in 1738, and the remainder of his family were victims of the tragic voyage across the Atlantic and the aftermath of disease. He began his career as a school teacher in Pennsylvania circa 1750, and moved south by the 1760's. As early as 1766, he served four Churches in the German settlements of Alamance and Guilford Counties, one of which had a pulpit and altar. He became a property owner on Blackwater Creek and Dutch Buffalo Creek, in Mecklenburg County.⁸² Therefore, he was probably preaching to the congregation that became St. John's, Cabarrus.⁸³ One Reformed history cites that "Suther founded [Old] St. Paul's Church in 1770, but remained only a year, when he removed to Guilford County." This seems unlikely, due to Doubber's presence; however, it is quite possible that Suther preached in the area, and may have been of a different religious persuasion than Doubber. Suther later moved to the Orangeburg District of South Carolina, where he lived until his death on September 28, 1788. During the period after Doubber relocated, he and Suther may have occasionally returned to the area west of the Catawba River.⁸⁴

By 1772, the Moravian Pastor George Soelle, who was ordained as a Lutheran minister in 1741, and who had moved to North Carolina in 1770, was also preaching at the four churches in Alamance and Guilford Counties, as well as in the Moravian settlement. He also made a few visits to the Dutchman Creek area, where he encountered Lutheran Pastor Henrich Burchard Gabriel Wortmann [with many spelling variants], and described him as "being born in Hanover, and being an educated, ordained minister."⁸⁵

Pastor Wortmann becomes an interesting study in early German pastors, and the woeful shortage of current information about them. Wortmann arrived in this country on the ship Queen of Denmark, and had come from Hamburg by way of Cowes in England. He pledged his oath of allegiance to the King on November 3, 1752, in Philadelphia, and was described as "a Lutheran Minister."⁸⁶ His biography beyond this point is less well known.

He had been educated at Gottingen in 1738, was ordained in Germany, and served a few parishes prior to his emigration. Pastor Henry Melchor Muhlenberg had strong negative opinions about Wortmann:

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80. Brent H. Holcomb, *South Carolina Marriages, 1688-1799*, (Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., Baltimore: 1980), p. 104. A. S. Salley, Jr., *Marriage Notices in the South-Carolina Gazette and its successors (1732-1801)*, (Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., Baltimore: 1976), p. 111. *Charleston County, S. C. Wills*, No. 28, 1800-1807, BkD, p. 104, 3 Feb. 1801, transcr. Old Salem Archives, where son Godfrey Dubbert's will lists his brothers as Frederick, William, and Philip, and his sisters as Elizabeth Schroter and Catharena Groce. David L. Hamiter, "The Hamiter Family of South Carolina," *SCMAR*, Vol. XXIII:1, (Winter 1995), pp. 3-12.
 81. Anne Williams McAllister and Kathy Gunter Sullivan, *Lincoln County, North Carolina, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, July 1796-January 1805*, 1988, p. 39.
 82. Carol S. Scott, "Migrations of a Minister: Researching the Life of Rev. Samuel Suther (1722-1788)", *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal*, Vol. XIX:2 (May 1993), pp. 66-78. Fries, II:800. Hofmann, II:331. Holcomb, *MCRD-1763-1779*, p. 158, DB 5:205-210.
 83. Frank K. Bostian and Bernard W. Cruse, LL. B., *Dutch Buffalo Creek Church*, (Salisbury: 1974).
 84. Rev. James L. Good, D. D., *History of the Reformed Church in the United States in the Nineteenth Century*, (Board of Publications of the Reformed Church of America, New York: 1911), p. 197. Once again, there was no area church named St. Paul's in 1770.
 85. Fries, II: 791, 793, 800, 804-805. Bost & Norris, pp. 25-26.
 86. Strassburger-Hincke, I:504.

. . . H. B. G. Wortmann, formerly pastor in the neighborhood of Hamburg, a man of the roughest, most indomitable temper, who, after being paid off with forty pounds by the congregation, quitted Lancaster [PA.] for a time, served the young congregation of Reading, and in 1757 began pastoral labors in Charleston, S. C., but was nowhere successful for any long period.⁸⁷

Wortmann also served briefly in Virginia and Savannah, prior to arrival in Charleston, where Muhlenberg once again described that church and its pastor:

Afterwards they accepted as pastor a Mr. Wartmann, an educated minister, who is said to have been an uncommon lively speaker but a fiery and grossly extravagant cholericus who had worn himself out with several congregations in Pennsylvania and Virginia. He remained here [Charleston] and then went farther into the country.⁸⁸

"Farther into the country" proved to be Piedmont North Carolina. By 1768, a Henry "Workman" appears on a militia muster list west of the Catawba River,⁸⁹ and by 1772, a Henry Wortmann was a landowner in Rowan; however, it has not been proven that *landowner* Henry Wortmann was the same as *Reverend* H. B. G. Wortmann. *Reverend* Wortmann's presence can be proven in Rowan County until late 1773, and the surname of Wortmann begins to appear with more regularity during the remainder of this decade. All property transactions of *landowner* Henry Wortmann were in predominantly German-speaking settlements.

With the possibility that there were two or more Henry Wortmann's who became North Carolina residents at about the same time, the Tryon County land entry is of considerable interest to this history. It consisted of two hundred acres on Leonard's Fork of Indian Creek, where a "Henry Wortman" was listed as an adjoining property owner as early as May 15, 1772. In January, 1773, he obtained ownership of this tract via a land grant from the Royal Governor. This property was not far from the location of "Warlich's Settlement" and its "School House Church," which was later named "Daniels." On October 24, 1772, *landowner* Henry "Wortmun" and "Nicholas Warlich" witnessed a Daniel's community deed in old Tryon County, as executed by Nicholas Welsh. Near the end of 1773, *Reverend* H. B. G. Wortmann witnessed a will in Rowan County, proving his presence in that area.⁹⁰

The name "Wortmann" disappears from local public record for a few years, and there are reports that he returned to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania for a period of time.⁹¹ Yet in 1778, the names of Peter "Vertman" and Michael "Whortman" appear from nowhere on Rowan County, Salisbury District Tax Lists. No deeds were located to ascertain land ownership, so it is possible they were on the land formerly owned by their father or other relative.

The next possible sighting of *Reverend* Wortmann occurs on April 26, 1780, in Charleston. James Parker, who was maintaining a diary on the British siege of Charleston, wrote:

Yesterday the Revd. Wickman [?] a Dutchman came to Gov. Martin from the loyalists of No. Carolina, around Salisbury. He gives a very favourable account of that country. They want to know how to act properly & are ready to take arms & execute any plan the Genl. recommends.⁹²

Governor Josiah Martin had fled North Carolina a few years earlier, and was stationed in Charleston for a period of time as the British began their southern campaign. Since there is no known "Dutch" *Reverend*

87. William J. Mann, D. D., *Life and Times of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg*, (Philadelphia: 1888), p. 307.

88. *MJ*, II:581.

89. Eaker, *German-Speaking Settlers*, p. 34.

90. *Ibid.* Hofmann, Vol. II, p. 273. Brent Holcombe, *Deed Abstracts of Tryon, Lincoln & Rutherford Counties North Carolina 1769-1786 Tryon County Wills & Estotes*, (Easley SC: Southern Historical Press, 1977), p. 48. RCC: Mark did not list the source for the Rowan will.

91. Bost & Norris (pp. 25-26) offer a citation that Wortmann may have returned to Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1775, where a son, Laurentz, was born. Wortmann would have been about 55 years old at this time. 1800 PA Census Index lists a Lawrence Wortman. 1810 VA Census Transcr., lists a Lawrence. John W. Wayland, Ph. D., *A History of Shenandoah County Virginia*, 2nd Ed., Regional Publishing Co., Baltimore, 1969; Repr. Strasburg, 1976, p. 417, lists Lawrence Wortman working at the Henkel Press in New Market.

92. James Parker, *Fragmentary Diary of Siege and Capture of Charleston*, card catalog, N. C. State Archives, transcr. from LPL Parker PA 9-87, MFZ.5.269.

"Wickman" in the Salisbury area, this citation is believed to be the diarist's attempt to anglicize the pastor's name to "Workman."

By 1782, Rowan County had the names of "Henery Wortman," a "Mikel Wertman," and a "Danul Wortman" (but no Peter "Vertman") on a property list subject to State confiscation, which was an available penalty for those who actively supported the British cause in the Revolutionary War.

There are Tryon, and later Lincoln County, deeds that mention surnames similar to "Wortmann" up to the first United States census, and all citations are on the headwaters of Leonard's fork of Indian Creek. In the 1790 census, the sum and total of similar surnames in the State of North Carolina are Henry and Peter "Wortman" of Salisbury District of Rowan County, and "Dan'l Wortman" of Morgan District of Rutherford County. In this same year, the Leonard's Fork property is described as including "widow Watman's improvements." On September 6, 1790, a "Henry Wartiman and mother Elisabeth (Lincoln County)" signed and/or affixed their marks to a deed for the same Leonard's Fork property obtained by "Henry Wartiman" in 1772. These two transactions indicate that a senior Wortmann had died, and that his widow had lived in a house on the Leonard's Fork property at some point in time. Son Henry lived in Rowan, and was likely assigned or elected as administrator of his father's estate, including the property where his mother had lived.

One other document of significance to the discussion of Pastor Wortmann is a Lincoln County Marriage Bond, whereby Henry and Caroline "Workman," and Michael and Susan "Workman" attested to the marriage of Daniel W. "Workman" and Martha Petrie in the year 1788. The name Daniel "Wartman" re-appears in the Leonard's Fork vicinity for several years after 1790, and the name "Workman" is not uncommon in Catawba County today.⁹³

Wortmann was certainly among the first resident Lutheran pastors in the State of North Carolina. Based on existing legal records, there is ample reason to suspect that **Heinrich Burchard Gabriel Wortmann was the first resident Lutheran pastor in the area west of the Catawba**, although for apparently a few short years.

Other early pastors include Lutheran P. Schmidt, from Orangeburg, South Carolina, who passed through the area on a return trip from New River in 1775. Moravian Brethren Bachoff and Ernst preached in various Lutheran and Reformed Churches in the years 1776 and 1777, but did not document a venture west of the Catawba River.⁹⁴

A traveling preacher named Miller also appeared at least once in 1779 in the Dutchman Creek area. His Protestant affiliation is not known.⁹⁵

One 1777 entry in the Moravian Records states, "Pastor Jung called on his fellow countrymen. . . . He was born in Rasdorf, near Hanau, is at present pastor of a Reformed Church on the Catawba River, . . ." ⁹⁶ If little is known about Pastor Wortmann, even less can be found about Jung.

There are also listings for German Reformed pastors Pithian (Bithahn), Schrum, and Schneider, with the former listed as being "of Lincoln." John William Pithan, born 1740 in the Palatinate of Germany, graduated from Heidelberg in 1759. He arrived in this country ten years later, signing in as "Joannes Guilielmus Pythan" as a previously-ordained minister. Soon, charges of improper conduct were brought against him, and he "confessed his faults, due to drink, and promised to do better." By 1770, Pithan was "deposed on account of his ungodly conduct," and he was dismissed from the Pennsylvania Coetus by 1772, when he moved to North Carolina, "where he seems to have redeemed himself." He preached in today's Catawba County prior to 1786, when he moved to Guilford County, where he died two years later. A Schneider is listed as a Reformed Pastor in 1780, and a second one, G. W. Schneyder, is listed in 1785, but current record of either's service has proved elusive.⁹⁷

The sheep were gradually flocking together, but alas, the shepherds were few and transient. The departure of Doubber about 1772, and the probable departure of Wortmann, left very few German-speaking pastors in Piedmont, North Carolina. The period between 1772 and 1776 was an interim when there were few resident German-speaking Pastors who could be termed as anything but temporary. In other frontier areas in this country, the church often turned to their School Masters.

⁹³ RCC: Mark did not footnote this entry and I cannot find his documentation on this marriage bond. There is a Rowan County marriage bond between Daniel Wortman and Margaret Knartzert on 13 Sept. 1779, see Holcombe, *Lincoln Co. Deed Abstracts*, p. 171.

⁹⁴ Fries, II:889; III:1064, 1152.

⁹⁵ Linn's, *Heidelberg Church*, pp. 863-872. There were several pastors named Miller, Mühler, or Moehler in the Pennsylvania/Virginia area. One of his baptisms was named "Henkel," suggesting Miller might have been Lutheran.

⁹⁶ Fries, III:1310.

⁹⁷ CR, VIII:751, 735.

The name of Philippe Heinrich Grider has been mentioned above regarding the Barringer and Pope School House. It is quite possible that Grider led German religious services in the early 1770's, and he remained as School Master in the Tryon-Burke-Lincoln County areas for many years as new counties were being formed and land changed county jurisdictions.

While proof of the existence of School Houses in the Lyles Creek area has not come forth, this German-speaking stronghold likely had constructed one or more, as many of the first generation children of these pioneers were very literate, and appeared in many English-speaking civil functions, although many still wrote in German script.⁹⁸ Also, if George Pope was so interested in education that he would obtain property for a school house, it would not be surprising to discover that his younger brother Henry and other Lyles Creek relatives were also.

Two persons may have also filled a part of the void in both education and religion to the German families during the periods without resident pastors. A self-described "Dutch Schoolmaster" from 1780 to 1782 was Frederick Balthauser, who lived in Lincoln County at a time that current Catawba County was a part of Burke. Some of his relatives may have been in current Catawba County, as a young woman by that unusual surname communed at "Saut Fark."⁹⁹ He could very well have helped to fill the classroom, or even to read sermons, during these few years in the area.

The second possible school master was Abraham A. Barrier, who was a landowner in the Lyles Creek community between 1778 and 1784, and had accumulated ownership or interest in a respectable 590 acres. He relocated to Kentucky and later to Alabama. He must have been deeply religious, as after he departed the area, he was ordained a Baptist Minister in geographical areas with few Lutherans or German Reformed, and was credited with the formation of ten congregations and two schools.¹⁰⁰ Barrier was a joint landowner with Balser Siegman, one of the founding fathers of St. John's, and he was a neighbor of Johannes Eisenhauer, one of her first Elders. Quite possibly, he honed his teaching skills in the Lyle's Creek settlement.

There were surely other church and school leaders who cannot be determined by available records, and the women of the homes must not be forgotten for their efforts in education of the children, although their activity in early church life was virtually unrecorded and often limited to their attendance in communion, an occasional marriage record, or sponsorship in a baptism. Women had no voice in church business affairs whatsoever.

A twist of Provincial political fate served to promote the arrival of the first Lutheran pastor with commitment to life-long service west of the Catawba River.

As early as 1753, there was a movement for the Colonial Assembly in the Province of North Carolina to set up religious parishes, and furnish them with suitable pastors of its own selection and faith -- the Church of England. The next year they passed the following law:

An Act, for appointing Parishes and Vestries, for the Encouragement of an Orthodox Clergy, for the advancement of the Protestant Religion, and for the Direction of the Settlement of Parish Accounts.

I. Whereas the present, as well as the Future Happiness of Mankind, essentially depends on the Knowledge and Practice of true Religion; and a permanent and certain Provision for an Orthodox Clergy, may conduce to the Encouragement of pious and learned Ministers of the Gospel, to settle and reside in several parishes in this Province, to the Advancement of the Protestant Religion, and encouragement of Vertue [sic] and Morality:

II. Be it Enacted, by the Governor, Council, and Assembly, and by the Authority of the same, That this Government be, and it is hereby divided into distinct Parishes, in the Manner following: . . . St. Luke's Parish in Rowan County. . . .101

The remainder of this law set up a tax of ten shillings per year on all taxable persons, which was about equal to \$2.50. Yet this tax included all persons, not just bona fide land owners. The law also required payment of twenty shillings (approx. \$5.00) for a marriage, and 40 shillings (approx. \$10.00) for a funeral.¹⁰² The law was set up to

98. One Burke County petition from circa 1782 contains many Lyle's Creek names. Nearly all German names were signed in German script, and not with a mark.

99. Eaker, p. 74. Note that Charles Woodmason listed a deceased pastor by the name of "Balsober" in South Carolina prior to the Revolutionary war. Connection is unknown.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 76. Record of Barrier's service is not proven.

101. Walter Clark, Ed., *The State Records of North Carolina*, Vol. XXV. (Goldsboro, NC, Nash Bros: 1906), p. 298.

102. Neil Carothers, *Fractional Money. A History of Small Coins and Fractional Paper Currency of the United States*, (Brooklyn, NY,

support the pastor in fine fashion, as one dollar, usually of Spanish silver or near-worthless currency, was hard-earned money to the typical pioneer farmer, who was well acquainted with the barter system for obtaining goods and services.

Upon enactment, the Lyle's Creek area was changed from Anson County to Rowan County, and was destined for provincial control over religion. The County Seat was Salisbury -- an area, like the Catawba Valley, also settled by a mixture of English, Germans, and Scots-Irish.

Governor Tryon did not realize that the majority of the settlers in the newly-formed St. Luke's Parish were families who were protective of their freedoms in the new land, and had little, if any, toleration for religious dictatorial advances. After some difficulty in obtaining a pastorate and many years had passed, Rev. Mr. Theodorus Swaine Draige (also seen Drage) accepted the assignment to Rowan County and St. Luke's Parish.

Draige arrived prior to March 13, 1770, and his name appeared on the province's list of clergy in July of that year.¹⁰³ He did not meet with great success with the English-speaking, Scots-Irish residents. In his first letter to Governor Tryon, he reports:

They say not in words only but wishing that as they have opposed England in endeavoring to intrude on their civil rights, they also shall, and have a right to oppose any intrusion on their religious rights, a Maxim I presume dangerous in itself not with respect to this county and the neighbouring [sic] counties, but to the whole Back Frontier of America, principally settled with Sectaries, and is deserving of attention of Government, before power is added to inclination.¹⁰⁴

On May 29, Draige reported to Governor Tryon about the controversial election of a vestry, as mandated by Provincial Law for Easter Monday. This letter was quite lengthy, and a brief excerpt is sufficient to describe the attitudes of much of the populace in the Parish of St. Luke's:

. . . was not as to which of those persons contained in those Lists the Vestry should be composed of, but whether there should be a vestry or not. . . . that they had thus kept the Church out for years and hoped to do so perpetually with much impudence and impertinent threats on the part of the voters as to the consequence of any establishment of a clergyman of the Church of England.¹⁰⁵

The events that actually occurred on that date were conveyed by letter from a later Episcopal Pastor, R. J. Miller.

That on Easter Monday, when an election according to the then law of the Province was to be held for the purpose of electing vestrymen, the Presbyterians set up candidates of their own persuasion and elected them, not with any design either to serve or act as vestrymen, but merely to prevent the Episcopalians from electing such as would have done so.¹⁰⁶

Regarding mandated taxes to be collected for the payment of the clergy of St. Luke's Parish, the people resisted by stating "that it was their opinion that everyone ought to pay their own clergy, and what the law required was a constraint, the other would be a free gift." Draige also reported that there were "six and twenty" stations in his Parish, including "about five thousand souls."¹⁰⁷

On July 22, Governor William Tryon relayed a message to Secretary Hillsborough, that "Mr. Drage has met with great difficulties in his Establishment and probably will have many more to struggle with."¹⁰⁸

Braunworth & Co., 1930), Repr. (Wolfboro, NH, Bowers & Merena Galleries, Inc. 1988.), pp. 34-35. The author made the conversion between shillings and dollars based on rate of exchange in the Colonial Period.

103. CR, VIII:179, 222.

104. *Ibid.*, p. 180.

105. *Ibid.*, pp. 202-211.

106. Rev. Jethro Rumble, *A History of Rowan County, North Carolina*, (J. J. Bruner, Salisbury, NC, 1881), p. 82, cited from Rev. R. J. Miller letter, dated 1830, as published in *Church Messenger*, Oct. 15, 1879. The Anglican Church became commonly known as Episcopal after the Revolutionary War.

107. CR, VIII:202-211.

108. *Ibid.*, pp. 220-221.

In Draige's report to the Secretary of the Province, on February 28 of the following year, he describes the population in his Parish as:

. . . two-thirds of whom are of the church of England, the other a motley mixture, but the most distinguishable are the Irish Dissenters, who had the whole power of Government, as to these parts, invested in them by the late Governor: also composed of many Sects. His Excellency Mr. Tryon was apprehensive [how] these would be as to my settlement from them.¹⁰⁹

He described the English churches as over 40, with 7,000 souls from 900 families. He offered no such description of the German settlers. As to the non-English families, he predicted, "The church of England through the favor of the Almighty will steal like a slow still water upon them and establish itself in all these parts."¹¹⁰ In his statistical report, he did not include those who had settled, but who had not yet gained ownership of their land from the Royal Governor or Lord Granville.

The "Dissenters" caused Draige and the Church of England no small difficulty, as reported from new Governor Josiah Martin to Secretary Hillsborough in correspondence dated 7 March 1772:

. . . a complaint from the Rector of St. Luke's Parish in Rowan County, who alleges that the Clerk who under a Law of the Province is the dispenser of the Governor's Licenses for marriages encourages people who take them to go to the Magistrates to solemnize their Marriages in preference to the Rector and that he conceals from him the number of Licenses granted by which means he is deprived of his dues.¹¹¹

After a three year term and several complaints to the Governor, on February 17, 1773, Draige was described as the "late-Rector," and on February 20, Governor Martin reported Draige's complaints to the Assembly, whose Secretary John Harvey responded:

. . . The House have taken the same [petition] under consideration and are of the opinion that the Laws of the Province now in force are sufficient to remove the grievances complained of.¹¹²

Governor Martin then duly reported this situation to Earl Dartmouth, representing King George III, on March 31, 1773:

. . . that in the Parish of St. Luke's in the County of Rowan, they had actually expelled Mr. Draige the Rector, . . . by withholding his Salary, the only means of his subsistence, and forced him to retire to an Asylum to which he was invited in South Carolina. . . .¹¹³

Draige moved to Camden, South Carolina, where he served until he died in 1775.¹¹⁴

By these actions, the "dissenters" successfully upheld Freedom of Religion and separation of Church and State, not yet Constitutional Rights, as no similar provincial interference into religious matters of Rowan County and the so-called St. Luke's Parish was attempted. The Declaration of Independence and the ensuing war were just a few years away.

The German settlers of the same area were not considered a threat by Draige, as he actually befriended them. He recognized that his sermons were oblivious to many of them due to the language barrier, and that they might never be amenable to join the Church of England for this reason. He further offered his compliments in their behalf to the Governor in his letter of 1771 as follows:

109. *Ibid.*, pp. 502, 506.

110. *Ibid.*

111. *CR*, IX:267-268.

112. *Ibid.*, pp. 507, 520.

113. *CR*, XIX:622.

114. Thomas J. Kirkland and Robert M. Kennedy, *Historic Camden, Part Two, Nineteenth Century*, (Kershaw County Historical Society, Camden: repr. 1994), pp. 280-282.

The union they desire to live in with the Church of England and the kind assistance they are at all times ready to give, and frequently those who understand English attend the service [Draige's service], I hope . . . would be a means of cementing the union which at present [exists] amongst all the Lutherans in these parts, which are a very considerable body.¹¹⁵

Gaining the support of the ever-growing German-speaking population might shift the political balance of Rowan County in favor of its Rector. When the "sixty families" of Second Creek of the Yadkin made an inquiry, they found a friend in the most unlikely source, Pastor Theodorus Swaine Draige, the Rector of St. Luke's Parish of the Church of England. In Draige's letter to Secretary Hillsborough in 1771, he requested the Secretary to help obtain a German-speaking pastor and school-teacher. Two German laymen made the journey to Europe, and successfully recruited the services of a full-time Lutheran minister in Reverend Adolph Nussman (also seen as Neussman and Nussmann) and school teacher, Johann Gottfried Arends (Ahrend, Arent, Arnt, and finally, Arndt), who arrived in 1774. The congregation was contractually bound under this arrangement to the consistory at Hanover, under the auspices of King George III and the Anglican Church.¹¹⁶

Nussman, who was a converted Catholic and trained in a Lutheran theological college, soon found disfavor with his Second Creek Congregation. Notions reached Germany that "he was experiencing some hardships caused by some of his disloyal brethren who instilled in his congregation a suspicion [*sic*] that he was secretly still an adherent of the Papacy."¹¹⁷ This congregation opted for pastoral services of Arends. However, Arends was not an ordained minister, which posed a problem, as Lutheran ordination had become no easier during the last decade, and there was no local organization to properly effect promotion to the sacred office.

The ordination of Arends is shrouded in mystery. His ordination certificate reads as follows:

Second Creek, Rowan County, N. C.
August 28, Anno Christi, 1775,
Being the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity.

The Rev. Mr. John Gottfried Arends has been examined by me the Inspector over South and North Carolina, in the presence of several deacons, and thereupon ordained before the whole congregation, at their request.

The above-mentioned John Gottfried Arends is now, from this date, a regular Evangelical Lutheran pastor and minister. We recommend him, therefore, to the kind reception of all Christians at the North, and heartily wish that he may, as a friend of the Bridegroom, bring many souls to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and wait faithfully upon his office; also, with exemplary life and pure doctrine, bring all the straying and deceived back to the fold.

This witnesseth out of love for the truth and its undoubted attestation.

Signed JOACHIM BUELOW,
Missionary and Inspector over South and North Carolina.¹¹⁸

First, and most obvious, is that Arends was not ordained by Pastor Nussmann. If the Lutheran Pastor Wortmann was still present in the Dutchman Creek or Tryon County area, why was he not considered for this ordination?¹¹⁹ As ordinations often occurred with two or more officiating pastors, these two pastors are not known to have been present during the ceremony. Additional questions arise due to a correspondence between Nussmann and the Helmstaedt Society:

115. CR, VIII:506-507.

116. Bernheim, pp. 256-257. "Arends" was later changed to "Arndt" through the anglicization process, but the spelling used throughout this chapter is as he spelled his own surname in his will, located at the Lincoln County Register of Deeds.

117. *Helmstaedt Reports*, p. 143.

118. Bernheim & Cox, p. 16.

119. Wortmann was reported to have lived near Salisbury as late as 1780.

They had this man ordained on the Saludi River in South Carolina by a certain Mr. Beulow (a former clerk in a store who had done some preaching).¹²⁰

Was Arends ordained on Second Creek according to the certificate, or on the Saludi [Saluda] River per Nussmann? Or was he examined in presence of the deacons on the Saludi River and then later ordained before the whole congregation on Second Creek? From these conflicts, it is entirely possible, based on extant records, that "the first Lutheran Pastor ordained in North Carolina" was actually ordained in South Carolina.

Little can be discovered about Joachim Beulow, except that he resided in South Carolina and operated a mill on Crim's Creek in the Dutch Forks.¹²¹ Although he did not portray himself as a Pastor on the certificate, how he was appointed to the impressive title of "Missionary and Inspector over South and North Carolina" is unknown, as there were no Synods functioning in the two states, and this rank was not of any known Lutheran origin or a missionary office of the Pennsylvania Synod. The term "inspector" is usually considered Moravian, as Count von Zinzendorf appointed or ordained "inspectors" in Pennsylvania during the 1740's. Furthermore, orthodox Lutherans and German Reformers of the era adhered to the practice of a "Divine Call" from one or more congregations, and were resistive to the concept of an unattached traveling missionary. From the church records of St. John's in Charleston, Beulow owned a pew near the altar in that Church, and his name occurs on occasion in their church records. He was never a pastor there, nor was he ever referenced as "Pastor" Beulow, "Reverend" Beulow, or "Minister" Beulow -- but "Mr." Beulow.¹²² Yet a Newberry County, South Carolina land transaction refers to Beulow as "minister" near Crim's Creek, so the legal system must have recognized him as such.¹²³ Was Beulow privately ordained by John Nicolaus Martin, who also had owned land on Crim's Creek?

Regardless of the irregular or suspicious circumstances and conflicts in the reports surrounding his ordination, Arends was educated far beyond the norm of his congregation, and his ordination was accepted by Nussmann, his Church's Elders, the legal system, the later North Carolina Synod, and most importantly, his congregations. Not a derogatory word from Nussman or later German-educated pastors can be found regarding Arends. His work in the Lord's vineyard exonerated any doubt as to adequacy of his ordination, and an account given in a later chapter proves his commitment.¹²⁴

Arends made "missionary" trips to Lincoln County as early as 1775. The following year, he was present at "Der Saut Fark", which was the first name of Old St. Pauls. He maintained a listing of those who communed for the first time. This probably represented his confirmation class of the year, but may also have been a requirement of naturalization for the children who were born in Europe. Included on "der Saut Fark" list of 1776 are the following family names: Bolich(en), Hahn(en), Hauk, Kilian, Klein, Miller, Schuk(en), Siegmann, and Weinberger(n), names which all appear among the early gravestones in the St. John's cemetery. Specifically, Johann Miller (John Miller 1763-1822), who first communed on this missionary visit, is engraved on a marker at St. John's. Arends regularly added an "n" or "en" to the surnames of the females, in accordance with German grammar.¹²⁵

During 1776, based on his marriage list, Arends made contact with parishioners west of the Catawba River on February 19, March 18, June 10, August 6, December 12, and possibly other times. The year of the Declaration of Independence marked the first regular appearance of his ministerial work in this region.¹²⁶

120. *Helmstaedt Reports*, p. 144.

121. *S. C. Synod History*, p. 90. The name of "Crim's Creek" disappears from the South Carolina land records by the Revolutionary War. This is possibly Grimes Creek, which is just north of Columbia. Rev. John Nicolaus Martin had lived in this area, but must have been in Charleston at this time.

122. Conversation with Rev. Edward L. Counts, St. John's Lutheran Church, Charleston, SC, 26 April 1995, who was very familiar with Beulow.

123. Newberry County, SC, Register of Deeds, Book B: Page 107.

124. Evidence of Arends' acceptance by the legal authorities occurred soon after his ordination, when he began performing marriage ceremonies. As receiving Holy Communion was a prerequisite for naturalization, there is no known instance when Arends' administration of the sacrament was not recognized by the authorities as proper.

125. *Arends Diary*, p. 21. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, p. 95. Arends' presence for confirmation and Holy Communion at Old St. Paul's suggests that Wortmann no longer was in the area.

126. *Arends Diary*, p. 21, back of page.

What Nussman and Arends found was not the brightest picture of Christianity. To further deteriorate the religious conditions, the country immediately plunged into war with England, whose King George III promoted the consistory, and had aided the North Carolinians in obtaining these two men. Consequently, communications were severed with the consistory of Hanover, and further publications and assistance were impossible. Isolation from German theologians may have been a blessing in disguise, as Halle Seminary had "become the center of Illuminism," which attacked the old faith, creeds, liturgy, and writings of the Reformation.¹²⁷ The earlier teachers "had passed off the scene and the new teachers were not so firmly Lutheran and evangelical nor did they inculcate the same religious fervor and warm Christian piety . . ." ¹²⁸

Pastors Nussman and Arends, as well as the Reformed Pastor Suther of the eastern churches, were active in the war effort, and demonstrated unusual patriotism towards their newly-adopted homeland. Some other early German church leaders, including Wortmann and supposedly-Brethren Elder Lemuel Sanders, were loyal to the King, and the people became divided. The effects of war on the early North Carolina ministers are revealed by Muhlenberg's 1779 journal entry:

On July 28, I received a letter from Pastor Adolph Nussmann, of Carolina, in which he reports that he has had to give up the ministry because of war conditions. Is eager to serve the Lord, but does not know where, even if it were the end of the world.¹²⁹

The patriotic exploits of Pastor John Nicholas Martin were even more remarkable, as he found himself serving the Lutheran church in Charleston, when that city was seized by the British. When he was ordered to pray for the British army, he refused, "solemnly declaring that such action on his part would be the veriest hypocrisy, of which he dared not be guilty." He was then seized, his property confiscated, and he was banned from his church. He fled to the interior of the state and returned to Charleston after the war.¹³⁰

In the midst of the domestic and international turmoil, Arends bravely made the treacherous trip from Rowan County to now-named Burke County, and the people at "Saut Fark Cataber" showed the strength of their faith by assembling for worship in 1779. Family names of Bering(en?), Hahn, Klein, Jant(en) [Yount], Schmidt(en), Siegmann, and Volbrecht(en) [Fulbright], appear on his roster of first-time communicants.¹³¹ The name Bernhard Siegman appears on this communion list, and young Bernhard would become a prominent officer at St. John's.¹³²

Arends returned to Saut Fark in 1783, and confirmed a class of forty-two youth, including those from the Siegman, Mouser, Kilian, Becker [?Baker?], Hahn, Stein, Eslinger, Mull, and Volbrecht families.¹³³

In 1786, Reverend Arends applied for and received land grants in the area now known as Lincoln County, and established himself as a permanent citizen and plantation owner.¹³⁴ He is truly the "Father of Lutheranism" in this geographical area due to his nearly twenty full-time years of service to the area churches. By 1787, he served "the four Catawbaw [sic] congregations."¹³⁵ The first listed congregations are "Saut Fark Cataber" (Old St. Paul's) in 1776, "Cataber" (possibly the Dutch Meeting House at Macphelah) in 1776, and "Warlich Settlement" (Daniel's of Lincoln County) in 1779. Later he served at "Kilian Settlement" (present St. Luke's near Lake Norman and Lebanon Lutheran in early 1800's) in 1789, "Bieverdam" (became St. Mark's, South of Crouse

127. Edmund Jacob Wolf, D. D., *The Lutherans in America. A Story of Struggle, Progress, Influence and Marvelous Growth*, (New York and Rostock, Germany: 1890), p. 280.

128. Wentz, 1955, pp. 44-45.

129. *MJ*, III:253.

130. Ira Oliver Nosthein, D. D., *Lutheran Makers of America*, (United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia: 1930), pp. 195-197. See also Sprague, pp. 35-37.

131. *Arends Diary*, p. 18.

132. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, p. 94. *NC Synod Minutes - 1810*. Bernheim, p. 377. Bernheim & Cox, p. 38.

133. Anne W. McAllister and James W. Miller, Jr., "A List of Children of Settlers of German Descent in Central North Carolina, 1783-1792, *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal*, August 1987, pp. 142-143.

134. Lincoln County Register of Deeds, several transactions in several books. LCRD 4:60, 4:74, 15:314, 15:328, appear to be in current Catawba County.

135. *Helmsdaedt Reports*, p. 123. *Halle Reports*, p. 50. There were more than four German-speaking congregations west of the Catawba by 1787.

in Gaston County) in 1791, and "Linkhorn" and Zion in 1793.¹³⁶ It is likely that he also served the Lutherans at the Lyle's Creek community during this era or soon thereafter.

Arends' visit to "Saut Fark" in 1790 reveals family names of Baumann, Beker(n), Bolich(en), Hahn, Kilian, Klein(en), Mauser(n), Miller, Moll(en), Probst(en), Roeder, Schmidt, Schuk(en), and Vollbrecht(en), on the communion rolls. At least Johannes Schmidt (John Smith 1770-1847) and Andreas Kilian (Andrew Killian 1771-1828) communed on that date, and were later buried at St. John's.¹³⁷

In November 1792, Arends' first-time communion list at Saut Fark included the names of Eisenhauer, Folbrecht, Haffner, Klein, Kilian, Junt [Yount], and Stein. Johannes Stein and Johannes Eisenhauer were members of this class, and were but a few short years from being respected officers at another congregation a few miles to the north.¹³⁸

From 1773 to the late 1780's, there was little North Carolina interest from Germany, and no further support whatsoever. Finally, assistance was located in the name of Dr. Professor Johann Caspar Velthusen, General Superintendent and Professor at the University of Helmstaedt, who had set up a missionary organization called "Societas promovenda cognitione Christi", or Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, more commonly called the Helmstaedt Missionary Society. This organization was under the control of "most illustrious Prince and Sovereign [sic], Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick and Lueneburg, etc., etc."¹³⁹

Nussman corresponded on May 11, 1786, and it was received on October 14. He described the dire needs of Lutheranism, and requested additional Lutheran pastors and German printed materials, including a German Catechism, for the North Carolinians.

Poorly instructed children are at once led astray when they come in contact with unbelievers or with those of false beliefs. . . . The evil is obvious to all.¹⁴⁰

In these remotest parts, where blindness, ignorance, superstition and fanatic enthusiasm rage, the teachers are separated by distances of seventy, eighty, a hundred, and even two hundred miles.¹⁴¹

He further described the deplorable state of Christianity:

For the want of instructors and school teachers it has become completely degenerate, and must, if help does not come soon, revert completely to a state of heathendom. Thousands of homes with numerous children, but widely scattered, are forgetting Christianity. Their children know still less of it and the next generation will be veritable heathen.¹⁴²

Pastor Paul Henkel of the Pennsylvania Synod made missionary trips through the North Carolina from 1785 through 1789. During these trips, he preached among the eastern congregations, and listed one extended trip to the Methodists in Burke County (now Caldwell County). He does not mention preaching to the local congregations, but offered a similarly negative report of the religious condition of an area approximately eighteen miles from Salisbury:

Much experimental Christianity was supposed to exist here; however, hopeful as appearances were outwardly, they were nevertheless of short duration; many tore themselves away from the church, and were divided into different singular persuasions. The Germans became degenerated, lead disorderly lives with these other settlers, so that at this time a perfect Babel exists; foolish pride and many vices prevail. The few remaining upright souls are constrained to weep in silence over this desolation.¹⁴³

The Nussman letter offered insight into the clerical customs and attire of the day:

136. *Arends Diary*, pp. 17-21. McAllister and Miller, pp. 142-143. "Linkhorn" congregation has not been identified.

137. *Ibid.*, p. 20. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, IV:95,98.

138. McAllister and Miller, pp. 142-143.

139. *Halle Reports*, p. 48. *Helmstaedt Reports*, p. 88. Bernheim, pp. 251, 258. Jacobs, p. 296.

140. *Helmstaedt Reports*, p. 93.

141. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

142. *Ibid.*

143. Bernheim, pp. 368-369.

We wear all sorts of dark colors, gray, brown, blue. Since we always ride horseback on our travels the more delicate colors would not serve our purpose. Nevertheless while administering the Lord's supper or on other festival occasions it is customary to be dressed in black, if one has the clothes. A good raincoat if it is rainproof, is better than an overcoat, and is necessary on our frequent travels. Good linen is scarce here and very expensive, consequently it would be good if our incoming brothers supplied themselves with it before they start. . . . Boots are used while riding, heavier ones in the winter, and lighter ones in the summer; and while walking in the forest one is protected against bites of snakes, . . . Wigs we do not need. We wear our natural hair short, trimmed in English fashion, without any artificiality, without curls, powder or the like. . . . This one thing above all I wish and request, that no one [pastor] comes in here who was already married in Germany. It would have to be miraculous if he were not to meet with a thousand sad experiences. An American wife is in our circumstances infinitely better adapted.¹⁴⁴

Velthusen's inspired reaction to the Lutheran mission challenge in the Carolinas is evident in his 1787 report to the forenamed Prince:

. . . our brother in that distant land will be able to recognize the German spirit in which they must rear their children, if the latter shall at some time become worthy of their noble ancestry.

It reacts upon us with thrilling inspiration when we imagine how now soon a thousand voices of these German children on the outposts of the civilized world will join with us in imploring the Almighty to prolong the beneficent life of the most kindly Ruler, who as a defender of Germany is great, and as a Father to the oppressed, in a very exalted sense of the term, is immortal.¹⁴⁵

Unrelated to the Helmstaedt society, Reverend Christian Eberhard Bernhardt, from Stuttgart, Germany, came to America, and migrated from Savannah to Rowan County in 1787. He was the first Lutheran assistance to Nussman and Arends, as Wortmann no longer labored in this region (or cannot be found).¹⁴⁶

On March 12, 1788, after assurances that preachers "who proved at all to be worthy of the confidence placed in them, would not suffer any want," Carl August Gottlieb Storch was ordained at Helmstaedt, as Evangelical assistant pastor for North Carolina, departed on May 2 and arrived in Baltimore on June 27, thence to Charleston, and finally to North Carolina. He became the fourth currently-resident Lutheran pastor in the State. The fifth Lutheran pastor was Arnold Roschen, who left Germany on September 5, 1788, and arrived in North Carolina on February 20, 1789.¹⁴⁷

During 1788, religious books, catechisms, and other instructional materials were written, printed, and shipped to North Carolina. The Catechism was commonly called the "North Carolina Catechism." Dr. Velthusen and the Helmstaedt Society had taken a definite interest in North Carolina, and without such support, the destiny of Lutheranism would certainly have been much different.¹⁴⁸

Within a few short years, North Carolina found itself with five, German-educated, Lutheran pastors. Nussman was preaching at Buffalo Creek (Mecklenburg County). Bernhardt eventually took the areas of Stokes and Forsyth Counties, and then later to Guilford County, until 1800, when he moved to South Carolina. Storch assumed the Rowan County congregations. Roschen served in Davie County until 1800, when he returned to Germany. And Arends faithfully served at the churches west of the Catawba River, with little, if any, assistance whatsoever.

Meanwhile, the German Reformed settlers in southeast Pennsylvania and Maryland had sent a request to Holland for Pastors. On December 21, 1784, Andrew Loretz, Jr. arrived in Baltimore, with his father. The senior Loretz was accompanied by Rev. Bernard Wiley and Rev. Peter Paul Pernisius, as they had accepted the Calls. When the senior Loretz's Swiss accent could not be readily understood by his German parishioners, he returned to Europe and resumed his former pastorate. Andrew Loretz, Jr. remained in Pennsylvania and Maryland until 1786.

That year, Paul Henkel encountered "the old Mr. Repass, a Swiss" with one "Andrew Lantz [Loretz], who was also from Switzerland and had come to Pennsylvania with his father and the Rev. Willeg" [*sic*, Wiley].

144. *Helmstaedt Reports*, pp. 125-126.

145. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

146. Bernheim, p. 311. Bernheim & Cox, p. 18.

147. *Helmstaedt Reports*, pp. 35, 121. Bernheim, pp. 312-316. Bernheim & Cox, p. 36.

148. *Helmstaedt Reports*, pp. 109-111. Bernheim, pp. 286-287.

Repass, "who was there too seeking congregations," and Loretz were preaching to a congregation on Red Creek upon Henkel's appearance on one of his trips. Repass preached against both Henkel and Reformed Pastor Wiley, which caused "an uprising" which Henkel "could not abate." Thus was the unpleasant first encounter between two ministers who later shared the pulpit at St. John's Union Church.¹⁴⁹

Loretz arrived in Lincoln County, North Carolina, during or before 1788, and located about four miles west of Lincolnton. Loretz's ordination is as mysterious as that of Arends, but possibly he was ordained by Pastor Wiley or Repass privately. Dr. Corwin, a Reformed historian, lists his ordination in the year 1789. Pastor Loretz was a man of some financial means, as he soon accumulated considerable real estate holdings, and did quite a bit of land speculating. In 1792, he purchased fourteen acres from Jacob Shuford, Jr., near Danicels Church, where he completed his fine brick home in 1793. He had other properties in that area also. With Peter Eaker Loretz claimed four hundred acres on Beaver Dam Creek, including "Tuppert's old improvement." In 1795, he bought 895 additional acres along Beaver Dam Creek from the heirs of John Frederick Doubber -- much of which he soon re-sold. He soon served five congregations, in addition to saddling up one of his two black horses for missionary trips to Guilford, Rowan, and neighboring counties, as well as to South Carolina.¹⁵⁰

The arrivals of Arends and Loretz proved to foster the growth of several established congregations, and encourage the organization of several more. Among the new congregations were Zion, Grace, and Lebanon in current Catawba County, Salem in Lincoln, and of course, St. John's.

These two men are similar in more ways than their dates of arrival and uncertain ordinations. They both amassed large land-holdings, and they brought the gentile customs of the clerical elite of Europe to the North Carolina frontier. Arends was described by his daughter, Elizabeth: "Though living in the wilds of Carolina, he never forgot his proper mode of dress, and until his death even when walking in the fields would wear his high hat, gloves and carry his cane."¹⁵¹ Loretz dressed similarly, with "polished silver knee buckles, silk stockings and spotless linen." When confronted by a typically-frugal German settler that this attire was "unessential in a minister" and presumed that his "salary was much too large," Loretz replied that the money used to purchase clothing was not earned at the local congregation, "but from South Carolina."¹⁵²

Although English-speaking preachers certainly appeared in the area, this was of little benefit to Lutherans or German Reformed, many of whom held fast to their native language. "Not only did these Germans dearly love their mother tongue, but they also wanted to transmit it uncorrupted to the generations yet to be born."¹⁵³

Religious customs became established during the latter portion of the eighteenth century by the German pastors of the area. An eloquent account exists in a letter dated 1789, from Rev. Roschen to the Helmstaedt Society.¹⁵⁴

The church service I try to make as solemn and as suitable to the occasion, but with all as simple, as possible. I can however not restrict my discourse to three quarters of an hour; for there are members of my congregations who often ride as far as 3 German miles (18 miles) to church, and furthermore there is only one service every four weeks in each church. Christenings take place after the sermon in presence of the entire congregation. When the Lords Supper is held on Sundays, the preparations for it occur on the preceding Fridays. Private confessions are unknown here.

Funerals take place in the following manner: If the church is too far removed the dead are buried at their home, occasionally also at the home of a good neighbor where then gradually a sort of churchyard is formed. If, however, as is usually the case, they are brought to the church (to a regular cemetery) the coffin is at first placed before the front door of the house. At the foot of the corpse stands the

149. Fincke's, *Autobiography of Reverend Paul Henkel*, p. 31.

150. D. P. Loretz, "The Rev. Andrew Loretz," *Reformed Church Messenger*, 1869. Reprinted in *The Piedmont Press*, April 14, 1877, p. 1. Corwin, p. 659. Citing Loretz's land transactions would be exhaustive. His estate settlement contained about 1000 acres of land in various locations, and he had sold much off before his death.

151. Robert Smith Reinhardt, *A Brief History of the 100th Anniversary of the Completion of The David Smith Home and An Historical Sketch of The Smith Family*, originally published August 1924, reprinted with additions, 15 March 1981, no page numbers. David Smith married Arends' daughter, Elizabeth.

152. Loretz article in *Piedmont Press*

153. William H. Gehrke, "The Transition from the German to the English Language in North Carolina," in *North Carolina Historical Review*, XII:1 (Raleigh: January 1935), p. 3.

154. *Helmstaedt Reports*, pp. 243-247. This is the location of the entire letter, and is not hereinafter footnoted.

preacher, and around the coffin on all sides, the congregation. No invitations to a funeral are sent out. Everybody considers it his duty to come, and indeed on horseback. Then the pastor has a song, or at least a few verses, sung, after which he gives a short address of about eight to ten minutes. Meanwhile the lid of the coffin is removed and the women crowd around uttering a pitiful wail. Then the pastor orders the coffin to be closed and placed in a wagon while the people mount their horses. Thus after refreshments of bread and rum at the house of the deceased the procession moves to the church. Upon arriving at the church the pastor commands halt, the corpse is let down from the wagon, a few verses are sung, the coffin is again opened, and while singing the crowd marches by twos to the grave. After the body has been lowered a silent prayer is offered and the grave is filled during the singing of a song. Then still continuing their chant they betake themselves to the church where the funeral sermon is given from the pulpit.

Marriages here are of two varieties. The one, according to the church discipline, calls for three successive announcements of the banns. In the case of the other, which occurs with equal frequency, the procedure is in general as follows: The groom secures a certificate from the Superior Officer [at the County Seat], comes riding along with his friends of both sexes, the bride riding by his side, to the pastor, or if none is available, to the Justice [of Peace] where the ceremony is performed. He enters holding in his right hand his flask of rum, greets with a 'good morning,' drinks to the health of the one officiating, produces his certificate and then goes back to get his bride and the rest of the party. The questions directed to the groom are: whether he has stolen (that is, kidnapped) his bride,—which occurs frequently,—and whether the parents have given their consent. If one steals his bride and has a license . . . the objections of the parents are of no avail. As a rule in this country the son, as soon as he has reached his twenty-first year, and the daughter as soon as she is eighteen years old, no longer stand under the control of their parents. In case of marriages, which, by the way, are often contracted very early in life, provision for the future need not be any cause for worry. Whoever is willing to work can easily obtain a plantation and poor people generally are not to be seen here at all. These marriage unions are very fruitful. Thirteen or fourteen children, which usually all live, are not infrequent in these families.

This last spring I had in my central congregation twenty-four to be confirmed, whom I had instructed for seven weeks, meeting them three days in the week. This class consisted partly of married men and women up to the age of thirty, and partly of younger people ranging from sixteen to twenty years in age. We meet in the church. . . . Among the things to be especially emphasized for the younger people before this confirmation was the admonishment not to contract any marriages with the English or the Irish. And even though this may seem very unreasonable to a European, it is in this region a very important matter. For in the first place, the Irish in this section are lazy, dissipated, and poor, live in the most wretched huts and enjoy the same food as their animals (although in the cities this matter is reversed). In the second place, it is very seldom that German and English blood is happily united in wedlock. Dissensions and feeble children are often the result. The English wife will not permit her husband to be master in his household, and when he likewise insists upon his rights crime and murder ensue. In the third place, the English of this region do not adhere to any definite religion, do not have their children christened; nor do they send them to any school, but simply let them grow up like domestic animals.

This eighteenth century masterpiece of prose continues with a description of the living conditions of the Germans in Piedmont, North Carolina.

Most of the people here are quite contented on their plantation. I recently visited one of my parishioners, and to my question as to how he was faring, I received the answer: "If we were to complain God would have to punish us; we lack nothing necessary, and have considerable left for ourselves and for others; we are well, and everything on our plantation is in good order. Since we already have surplus so soon after the war, we will rapidly become wealthy, if God grants us peace."

Luxury is unknown here. All the necessities are made at home, both utensils as well as clothing. The women are quite experienced in the weaving and working of linen, and skilled in the utilization of wool, and especially of cotton, which thrives here unusually well, and indeed with very little effort. Likewise the women are very apt in the dyeing of wool. A well trained girl [presumably slave or indentured servant] can consequently not be had for less than an annual wage of 32 Spanish thalers. The food is very simple, but they eat much meat.

The plantations consist for the greater part of two hundred to three hundred acres. However there are some consisting of so many thousands. One plantation adjoins another. Fifty or sixty acres are cleared and tilled and the rest constitute the great American forest of this region.

As far as the relationships of the German-sent pastors to their congregations, the Roschen letter is revealing:

Flour, corn, hams, sausages, dried fruits, chickens and turkeys, geese, etc. were abundantly furnished from all quarters. In fact, we have up to the present time not paid out a cent in our household for such things.

During the first four weeks, . . . , I found that it [my salary] was based on a fixed sum of 70 pounds in metal money annually, which amounts to about twice that amount in paper money. The extras here are rather high: a marriage fee without address, likewise for a funeral address, one Spanish Thaler [dollar]; for the confirmation of a child, likewise a Spanish Thaler.¹⁵⁵

We are treated here with a great deal of respect seldom if ever shown to anyone else. There is no class distinction. As yet no one has ever spoken to me, no matter where it was, who did not hold his hat in his hand.

It can be assumed from the Roschen letter, that other German ministers were treated generously, and that the worship services were held in a similar fashion.

Reverend Arnold Roschen provided one last insight into the law-abiding German population of the Rowan County area, which for reflection on our ancestry, bears repeating two centuries later:

Recently Reverend Mr. Storch and I were walking past the city hall in Salisbury when a man was brought to the whipping-post. A German called us to remain a moment in order to see how the Americans treated their rascals and thieves. To my question: "He is certainly not a German?" I received the following answer, which is literally true: "As yet no German has ever been at the whipping-post, nor was any German ever hanged in Salisbury." . . . Meanwhile the unfortunate man was bound, stripped of his clothes, and thoroughly flogged. Then his ears were cut off and both cheeks branded with a hot iron!

An additional Reformed Pastor, Samuel Weyberg, son of Reformed Pastor Caspar Weyberg of Pennsylvania, was preaching at the Lowerstone Church circa 1795, and was known to his brethren west of the Catawba, where "he preached to the congregations in Burke, Lincoln, Rowan and Cabarrus Counties." With the Louisiana purchase, many Lincoln County residents were migrating to the Cape Girardeau, Missouri area. North Carolina pastor Weyberg was called and is reported to have moved into their midst in 1803.¹⁵⁶ This date is not easily reconciled with the encounter that Paul Henkel had with Weyberg in May 1804, within riding distance of "old Paul Anthony," who sold the land to Old St. Paul's and was then living in Burke County. Apparently, Weyberg served area Reformed congregations until at least 1804.¹⁵⁷ The presence of both Loretz and Weyberg in the very early 1800's indicates the strength of the German Reformed in the area.

On May 20, 1794, the available Lutheran pastorate met at Buffalo Creek Church, Mecklenburg County, with the purpose to ordain Robert Johnson Miller into the ministry. Nussman, Arends, Storch, Roschen, and Bernhardt -- all of the German-born Lutheran pastors in North Carolina -- were present, examined Miller, and signed the ordination certificate. The Scots-Irish Miller was a Methodist licentiate who had been preaching to an Episcopal congregation, White Haven "union" Church in Lincoln current Gaston County, which had requested his ordination.¹⁵⁸ Ministerial shortage and the local ordination crisis is illustrated by the fact that the Lutheran pastors consented to this ordination and accepted Miller into their association, although the doctrinal distinctions between Lutheran and Episcopal were minimal during this era.

Pastor Miller lived in today's Catawba County for a period of time in the 1790's.¹⁵⁹

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155. Note that U. S. coin and currency was not in existence at this time, and coinage of other countries was a confused situation. The Spanish "Thaler" would later be roughly equal to the U. S. silver "dollar". Paper money was not then backed by bullion, and was therefore not on par with silver or gold. The "extras" constituted a large portion of a pastor's income.
156. Rev. Martin F. Kuegele, "The First Lutherans in the State of Missouri," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XXV:3, (St. Louis: October 1952), p. 136. Carl Hammer, Jr., *Rhinelanders on the Yadkin*, (Salisbury: Rowan Printing Company, 1965), pp. 68, 75. Rev. Prof. James J. Good, D. D., *History of the Reformed Church in the United States in the Nineteenth Century*, (New York: Board of Publications of the Reformed Church of America: 1911), p. 198. The name "Weyberg" is also seen as "Whybark" and other variants.
157. Paul Henkel to Solomon Henkel, 16 May 1804, UVA, 8653-i, Box 1, Folder 1803-1804. Paul Henkel names him as "Weinberg," but accurately describes his father as a pastor in Philadelphia. The letter is in German, and it is unclear whether Paul was in Burke or Catawba County when he met Weyberg, but appears to be Catawba.
158. Bernheim, p. 337-340. Bernheim & Cox, pp. 18-19. Socrates Henkel, D. D., *The History of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod*, (New Market, VA: 1890), p. 9. A note about Rev. R. J. Miller: He married Mary Perkins, daughter of Catawba County pioneer John Perkins. In addition to witnessing the land deed to St. John's, Perkins gave Miller and his daughter real estate in today's Caldwell County. About 1806, the Millers moved to this property. Cited from George Raynor's, *Piedmont Passages: VII Religion and Education in Piedmont North Carolina*, pp. 34-35.
159. McAlister & Sullivan, *LCCP&QS, 1789 April--1796 April*, pp. 87, 94. In 1795, Miller was appointed by the court to a Road Jury, which

By 1805, Nussman had died and Roschen, Bernhardt, and Weyberg relocated, dwindling the available supply of pastors significantly, as several new congregations were springing up.¹⁶⁰ Frontier religious customs were established, and the area west of the Catawba River continued to be served by Arends, Loretz, Miller, and with brief appearances of others.

And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where. Luke 9: 6

included 18 other persons who lived in current Catawba County. They determined the Lyles Creek crossing to be located at Simon Jonas's plantation.

160. Bernheim, pp. 338-340, 348-349.

THE FIRST HOUSE OF WORSHIP

Take heed now; for the Lord hath chosen thee to build a house for the sanctuary: be strong and do it. 1

Chronicles 28:10

The hardy German stock that settled the Lyle's Creek valley taught themselves to be self-sufficient. They cleared their own land, established their own farms, and built their own log houses, barns, and other necessary buildings. They somewhat learned the English "system" of trade and government. In some respects they were a rather reclusive society due to language; in other instances, they could band together in near unanimity of purpose to promote their collective interests to State and County governments. While some of the pioneers had been held and provided for under a fairly authoritarian local government in Europe, this was certainly not the case in America. The Lyle's Creek settlement was over two hundred miles from the provincial or State government, and upon entering the nineteenth century, it was about twenty-five miles from the nearest sign of a local government in Lincolnton. Other than the short-lived town of Ulrichsburg on Clark's Creek¹, there was not a single municipality in the "Upper Regiment" of Old Lincoln County until the mid-1800s.

The self-reliance or self-sufficiency of the early pioneers led to a primitive system of self-government. They soon realized the importance of community. They helped their neighbors in "raising" their houses and barns. They took care of their own poor, widows, orphans, and infirmed. They bartered their own crafts and crops with their neighbors for mutual benefit. The calamities of the Indian War and the Revolution taught the necessity for organization, and that every American citizen had a role in it. This became especially clear when sons were asked or forced to enroll in the military. They began to understand that if they wished for their collective concerns to be addressed by local or state government, they must band together into a more cohesive unit, but seemed resistant to organize their own towns or any local system of civil government. Government was viewed with some suspicion, and there are ample reasons. Some had been abused by their governments in Germany. Others had been victims of fraud or were otherwise misled in the chaotic method of obtaining land ownership in the Granville District. Leading into the Revolution, the abusive taxes and tactics of the King and the Royal Governor were disliked, as these authorities had done little to protect the frontier settlers or maintain law and order in the area. In general, the people relished their newly-won freedoms and resisted governmental interference that threatened them.

This does not mean that local social or political structure was non-existent among the German populace. The local Germans were decades ahead of their English counterparts in early educational and religious development. Early organizational efforts resulted in the Barringer/Pope School House in the 1760s and several churches prior to 1800. These organizations and buildings became centers of community life, and served as a learning laboratory for their leaders in the principles of self-government. Leaders in the church were often leaders in local government, especially if they were bilingual. St. John's Church was to become one of the strongest of these non-incorporated communities, with its own church, school, and Christian, rather than civil, identity.

Traditionally, the founding date of St. John's has been listed as 1798, based on the transfer of title to the church property, as this single document is the first conclusive evidence of the existence of the St. John's congregations. It is excerpted from the Lincoln County Deed Book as follows:

This indenture made this 28th day of November in the year of our Lord 1798 between Henry Pope of the County of Lincoln and State of North Carolina of the one part to the elders of the United Congregations of St. John's and their successors in office forever in trust of said congregation consisting of Episcopalians, Lutherans and Presbyterians, where the regular ministers of the said denominations are to have full and free liberty to exercise the duties of their office when legally called thereto . . .

1. Ulrichsburg is also known as Crowdertown, and was the brainchild of Ulrich Crowder. This town was about three miles southwest of Conover and two or three miles northwest of Newton.

The deed states the cost at "ten pounds," and Pope released his rights to "the said Elders & their successors in office **forever**."

Being a part of a tract of 350 acres granted by His Excellency, William Tryon, Esqr., Governor, to Henry Pope by a King's patent bearing date of the 13th day of our Lord 1765 and being No. 293.

Thus, this tract was one transaction removed from the claimed ownership of the King of England, when the area had previously primarily been inhabited by Indians. This deed was witnessed by the well-respected John Perkins, Jacob Fulbright, and Bernet Siegman. Pope and Siegman signed in German script.²

On the first Monday in July, 1799, Jacob Fulbright appeared before Justice John Wilfong at the Lincoln County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, and the real estate transfer became officially recognized and recorded.³

The site selection was certainly done with considerable forethought. As the German settlers had sprawled from the earliest settlements along the South Fork northward, the Lutheran and German Reformed center of population moved likewise. The list of land transactions of a previous chapter is a preponderance of evidence that a considerable majority of the earliest settlers in northern Lincoln County, and certainly those along the Lyle's Creek valley, were of German-speaking ancestry.

The building known as South Fork Meeting House was not designed for such an influx and growth of German-speaking church-people. As its original building was about thirty years old, it was becoming known as "Old Church" or "Old Meeting House," and the time was right for a new building and more convenient location. Those who lived along the Catawba River or on its northern shores were forced to travel up to ten or fifteen miles in order to hear a sermon in their own language, and receive the means of grace in Holy Communion. It became a matter of convenience to the masses for one or two pastors to travel to a new location rather than hundreds of people to walk, ride by horseback, or ride in a wagon to "Old Church" at "Der Saut Fark."

The site was conveniently situated about one mile east of the primary road connecting the Oxford Ford on the Great Catawba River to the county seat of Lincolnton, and was nearly half way between the mother church and the ford. It was also situated along the main connector road to the Island Ford crossing of the same river. During this period there were no bridges across major waterways, and crossing the Great Catawba River by horse or wagon was possible at only a few locations at the shallow fords. Thus, the property was ideally situated near two of the primary transportation arteries in northern Lincoln County.⁴

And what a beautiful piece of property it was! Selection of this hilltop for a church site -- rising steeply from the fertile plains of Lyles Creek basin -- guaranteed for centuries the prominence of St. John's in the surrounding community. Any edifice constructed on this site was certain to dominate the skyline. Later, the church, with its illuminated cross on the tower, would be visible from neighboring counties on a clear night. And the beckoning call of the Church's bell could be heard for miles.

The location of a church on a hilltop was consistent with German tradition. These settlers brought with them the knowledge of the soil. They well understood that the river and creek valleys offered the best land for agriculture, and soil found on the ridges and hills was much poorer, but much firmer and suitable for building construction. As it was customary to clear a portion of the church property for a "church yard" or cemetery, situating it on the very crest of a hill was most desirable, as the plot would not be subject to either erosion or flooding.⁵

The deed itself is enlightening. Not only was real estate conveyed,

2. Lincoln County Register of Deeds, Deed Book 9, pp. 200-202. Excerpts from deed are throughout this chapter, and are not footnoted further.

3. Anne Williams McAllister and Kathy Gunter Sullivan, *Lincoln County North Carolina Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, July 1796 January 1805*, 1988, p. 90.

4. Oxford Ford was located approximately one half mile west of the current location of Oxford Dam, near "Taylorsville Beach". Island Ford was about the same distance above current Lookout Dam, near "Sunrise Beach".

5. The five earliest Union Churches in today's Catawba County followed all these customs. South Fork Meeting House was situated on a ridge on the same Oxford Ford Road; Zion and Grace are also on a ridge road connecting Lincolnton and Morganton; and the later Church at St. Peter's followed this excellent example and was also on Oxford Ford Road.

THE CONGREGATIONS WERE LEGALLY GIVEN A NAME!

THEY WERE GIVEN A CHRISTIAN IDENTITY!

ST. JOHN'S!

Hereafter, the church was known by this or similar German names, each and every early preacher, the yet-to-be-formed North Carolina Lutheran Synod, and other documents for the German Reformed congregation, referred to her by that name. Although the name is obviously that of one of the twelve disciples, perhaps there were other motives for the appellation, as it was the most common given name of Biblical origin in the German-speaking community, with several Johns, Johans, Johanneses, Hanses, and even the surname of Jonas living along Lyles Creek.

The deed names the religious affiliations as Episcopalians, Lutherans and Presbyterians. The concept of "Unionism" was carried down the "Great Wagon Road" by the pioneers. From the earliest days, members of several faiths had accompanied each other to America and located together in the same settlements. In Pennsylvania, by the beginning of the Revolutionary War, there were seventy-eight union churches. This represented about forty-five percent, and was a widely accepted congregational arrangement.⁶ If denominational inter-marriage had not been part of their experience in Europe, if it was not customary in their earlier American settlements, it soon became commonplace on Lyle's Creek!⁷ All six of the earliest German Churches in current Catawba County were union churches -- at least in their formative years.⁸ From an 1806 letter stating the condition of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina, Lutheran Missionary Paul Henkel described eight or nine congregations in Lincoln County, of which, "all of these have erected joint houses of worship."⁹

The shortage of German-speaking pastors promoted the "Union" concept of Church organization. When there was no Lutheran pastor available to perform a baptism or funeral, an available Reformed was requested for these services. Members of both denominations sat side by side to hear a preacher offer a sermon in their native language. The presence of a pastor of their own language was definitely an occasion in the community.

The South Carolina ministers of both Lutheran and German Reformed faiths also had recognized the "unionism" trend, and had publicly broached it as early as 1788. Their resolution stated that "it is not to be understood that any member of either confession should forsake his confession, but that both Lutheran and Reformed, who are members of one or the other of the incorporated Churches, and who have hitherto united in the attendance on worship, shall continue to enjoy the same rights and privileges, without the least reproaches in consequence of their respective confessions."¹⁰ The intent is clear, that any alliance or agreement between the congregations of the two faiths was not for purposes of doctrinal union, but for receiving the means of grace. It is also apparent, that the Lutherans and Reformed were accustomed to worship at the same time under the pastor who met the appointment -- regardless of creed.

There is no mention after the original deed that there was ever a regular Episcopalian influence at St. John's, and there were very few English-descent settlers in the local area who would have held to that faith. In some areas of the country, the term "English Lutheran" was synonymous with "Episcopalian."¹¹ As the deed was witnessed by, and possibly written by, John Perkins, he may have elected to use English terminologies. As one of John

6. Charles H. Glatfelter, *Pastors and People: German Lutheran and Reformed Churches in the Pennsylvania Field, 1717-1793*, Vol. II, (The Penn. German Society, Breinigsville, PA: 1981), Glatfelter, Vol. II, p. 163.

7. Glatfelter, Vol. II, p. 162. A typical example of this inter-marriage in the St. John's family of congregations is that of the daughter of Johannes Theobald Hunsucker, who married Peter Little, later elder of the Lutheran Congregation.

8. These churches include Old St. Paul's, Zion, Grace, St. John's, Lebanon, and St. Peter's. There are others, including English/German combinations.

9. Bernheim, p. 369. Emphasis added by the author.

10. Wolf, p. 313. The German Anabaptists were obviously excluded from the resolution.

11. Rev. H. E. Jacobs, "The History and Progress of the Lutheran Church in the United States," *First Free Diet in America, Philadelphia, December 27-28, 1877*, (Philadelphia: J. Frederick Smith, 1878) 127. Glatfelter, II:265-272, explores the normally friendly relationship in Pennsylvania between Lutheran and Anglican Pastors.

Perkins's daughters married Episcopalian Pastor Robert Johnson Miller (although ordained as such by Lutherans). Perkins might have included his son-in-law's religious tradition in the deed. It is remotely possible that there was a group of English settlers, who had organized an Episcopal congregation under Miller, and assisted in the building construction efforts. It is also feasible that Rev. Miller periodically served the congregation at its inception and that he wanted the Episcopal designation just in case he returned to his Episcopal roots.

Other than Lutheran, the only known denomination to claim land title is that of the German Reformed. A brief view into other early "union" church deeds similarly indicates that the terms "Presbyterian" or "Dutch Presbyterian" of that era were used somewhat interchangeably with "German Reformed," with the principal distinction being language. This definition was challenged in the Lincoln County Courts in 1828 by the German Reformed at Emanuel, the Old White Church in Lincoln, and it was ruled that the intent of the term "Dutch Presbyterian" was actually "German Reformed."¹² Also, little doctrinal distinction between the two denominations was emphasized by the early clergy, and many early Presbyterian pastors were accepted by both Presbyterian and German Reformed denominations if language was not an obstacle.¹³

The pitfalls of a "Union Church" or *Gemeindeschafliche Kirche*, the intermingling of membership on regular occasions, and the fiscal difficulties for construction and maintenance of church properties by two or more congregations, was not envisioned by those wishing to establish the first St. John's Church. Denominationalism was secondary to Christianity in the hearts of the pioneers and having their own Church was more important.¹⁴

One other phrase in the original deed attests to the solemn intentions of the founders to avoid some of the religious abuses of the eighteenth century. The pastors of St. John's were required to be "legally called" to their offices. It was an enforceable legal action to avoid some of the "roaming fanatics" and "rambling vagabonds" who had frequently gained access into area pulpits.

Like a proper lady, who carefully protects the privacy of her precise age, the congregation of St. John's is probably somewhat older than the date on the deed. There are two unsubstantiated quotations by past historians, who place the founding date as early as 1789, or as late as 1812. The former is due to a misinterpreted quotation of Pastor Paul Henkel in 1805:

I drove through the hills for several miles to my old friend Peter Mack on the Great Catawba River, and spent the day there. I was visited there by his son-in-law and his wife. The son-in-law had been instructed with others and confirmed in St. John's Church last August [1804]; the wife in the year 1789, as she was still home with her parents.¹⁵

Paul Henkel nearly always wrote in German, and this journal was no exception. This quote, if a grammatically correct translation, has been interpreted by some to suggest that Peter Mack's daughter was confirmed at St. John's as early as 1789, nearly a decade before the land purchase. The Mack family (also seen as Mock) had settled on Dutchman's Creek in the area that became Davie County (near Mocksville). The records of the Heidelberg Church, an early German church on Dutchman's Creek, lists the following events involving the Mack family:

Friedrich Mack, born Aug. 19, 1791, bapt. Nov. 18. Parents & sponsors: Peter Mack & wife Elizabeth.

Peter Mack, born July 13, 1792, bapt. Oct. 21. Parents and sponsors: Hinrich Mack and wife Catharina.

List of Communicants 1792 . . . Andreas Mack & wife, Peter Mack & wife, Johannes Mack, Margareta Mack.

List of Communicants 1793 . . . Andreas Mack & wife, Peter Mack.

12. Rev. Banks J. Peeler, *A Story of the Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church*, (Southern Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church: 1968), p. 214.

13. Don Yoder, "Tracking Ancestors in Europe: The Pennsylvania German Heritage Tour of 1994", *Der Reggebooge [The Rainbow]*", Vol. 28/1994 2, pp. 27-28.

14. Salem Church in Lincoln County, in 1997, remains a "Union" Church.

15. Presslar, pp. 105-106, from Finck's, *Paul Henkel Journal*, page unsearched.

Between 1791 and 1795, there was one child named Peter Mack, one Peter Mack and wife Elizabeth, and one Peter Mack and wife Barbara -- proving the existence of three Peter Macks. Heidelberg communion records do not exist prior to 1791, nor between 1795 and 1810, after which time no Macks were listed.¹⁷ No Mack or Mock is listed in the 1790 census of the St. John's area, including both Lincoln County and Iredell County, making it improbable that one of Peter Mack's daughter's was confirmed at St. John's in 1789. One Peter Mock appears on the 1800 Iredell County census, as he had migrated to the north side of the Great Catawba River.¹⁸ Also, Paul Henkel grew up on Dutchman's Creek, which confidently supports the possible friendship between Henkel and Mack. Therefore, it is highly likely that Mack's daughter was confirmed at the same Heidelberg Church on Dutchman's Creek in 1789, and not at St. John's -- as there is no known proof of its existence at that time.

The second erroneous legend regarding the birth of St. John's is found in *The Colonial Records of North Carolina*, and *The Historical Sketch of the Reformed Church in North Carolina*. Since these two sources are generally considered reliable, the following quotation has been cited repeatedly in local and North Carolina church histories:

About 1812 when the first house of worship at St. Paul's gave place to the one still standing, that part of the Reformed and Lutheran congregations which lived in the bend of Catawba river, erected for themselves a commodious log building six miles Northeast of the mother church.¹⁹

This was certainly a reference to St. John's, and the "mother church" became named "St. Paul's" several years after 1812. Various historians cite the re-building of Old St. Paul's from 1808 to 1820. A later Lutheran pastor ceased to use the name "Old Church," and began using "St. Paul's" in December of 1817,²⁰ which is a strong indication that this was the year a new building was completed and dedicated with a new name. Any coincidence of the reconstruction of St. Paul's and the original construction of St. John's is not substantiated by a shred of current evidence.

Disproving these two widely-respected historical statements is much easier than establishment of a fixed date for the founding of the St. John's "united congregations." Arguments of their existence prior to 1798 are many.

First, the congregation had elected officers and a sophisticated organizational structure was in place, which is strong evidence of prior existence. This action conformed to the 1796 North Carolina General Statute, Article XI, entitled "An Act to Secure Property to Religious Societies or Congregations of Every Denomination." This law permitted a congregation to establish itself as a legal entity through election of trustees, who then could conduct business in its behalf. The congregation could then own property, could buy and sell, had the right to sue, and generally maintained a quasi-corporate status.²¹ While this practice had already been observed locally, the Statute made it legal for the future.

Secondly, the cemetery beside the church probably did not begin as the Pope family cemetery, as Henry Pope's house was located quite a distance to the west of the Church -- near the stream at the bottom of the hill.²²

16. Jo White Linn, "Records of Heidelberg Evangelical Lutheran Church," *Rowan County Register*, Volume IV, No. 3, (August 1989), pp. 861-870.

17. *Ibid.*

18. *1790 Census*, p. 171. *1800 Census*, p. 168.

19. Peeler, p. 105. Similar quotations can also be found in Rev. G. William Welcher, "Early German Reformed Settlements in North Carolina," *The Colonial Record of North Carolina, Vol. VIII*, pp. 751-752; and nearly every other history of local German Reformed churches.

20. Rev. L. L. Lohr, *Diary of Rev. David Henkel - 1812-1830*. (Transcription: 1915), diary year 1817. Hereinafter referenced *David Henkel Diary*.

21. *Laws of North Carolina -- Published, According to the Act of Assembly, by James Iredell*, (Hodge & Will, Edenton: 1791), to which was appended the laws of later years, 1796, pp. 9-10. Copy was located at Van Hecke-Wettach Law School Library, UNC, Rare Book Room.

22. Bland Pope, direct descendant of Henry Pope, former Pope family historian from Austin, TX, in letter to Mr. Merritt Smith, dated 1977. Included in this letter was a map showing approximate location of Henry Pope's house. This location was verified by other sources.

The cemetery displays legible grave stones indicating date of death as early as 1800 for an infant John Null. The earliest readable date of birth is 1733—that of Anna Margaretta Somer(in).²³ Many other stones are worn away, indicating that either soft stone was used, the markings were not inscribed deeply, the cemetery had times of poor maintenance, or that the unreadable dates could be earlier. Most of these are in the older section, and are of soft stone, unreadable, and very old. It seems unlikely that the Null family would have buried a son at this location had an active and established Church not been present by the year 1800.

Finally, there would have been no need to purchase land if an established congregation were not ready to build a church by the year 1798. In fact, the deed mentions "houses" and/or "buildings" on the property, and a definite name was already in usage. However, assertion that the church building had already been constructed prior to the date of the deed is carefully shrouded in a cloak of standardized legal language.

Portions of a few Lutheran pastors' diaries remain from the formative years of St. John's and assist in the earliest possible founding date. In the diary of Johan Gottfried Arends, several early St. John's families were attending "der Saut Fark." Unfortunately, preaching visits, communicants, and marriages are unlisted after 1793, and the name of St. John's does not appear once. Therefore, this important source of information is incomplete and provides only slight insight into the Church's exact founding date. The latest entry where prominent early St. John's family names appear at South Fork is November of 1792.²⁴

One extant document from February 18, 1799, is the baptismal certificate of Maria Margaretha Hunsicker. She was the daughter of German Reformed Johann Theobald and Susanna Magdalena Neff Hunsicker, who had recently completed their fine, large, home about one mile to the west of St. John's. This German certificate clearly states the location as Lincoln Court, "South Furcke Catawbo," suggesting that the first church building at St. John's was not yet completed.²⁵

Little is known about the original Church structure by way of photographs or drawings. The earliest written description again comes from the personal journal of Lutheran Pastor Paul Henkel. In August of 1803, Henkel made a tour through the churches in Lincoln County to assist the aging Pastor Arends. On the Saturday before the second Sunday in August, Paul Henkel preached his first sermon at "Johanes Kirche," and recorded his amazement at what he observed:

I caught sight of John's Church, both outside and inside. IT IS THE MOST MAGNIFICENT BUILDING IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. THAT I HAVE EVER SEEN IN THIS LAND. It is described as a log building and is very spacious.²⁶

Much information is contained in this brief journal entry. First, the construction of a church building certainly occurred during or prior to the year 1803! Also, Henkel's superlative indicates that it was at that time the most impressive structure in western North Carolina! Missionary Paul Henkel had seen many.

Additional descriptions of this building were published on several occasions by a later Lutheran Pastor, C. O. Smith. In combination, a vivid picture of the building is preserved through his words:

... I do know that this first church was built of logs. I was baptized in it, and confirmed in the brick church which was erected when the old church was torn down. This log church was weather-boarded and ceiled; was two stories high; had a gallery with a floor-space

23. Catawba County Genealogical Society, *Catawba County Cemeteries, Volume IV*. (Catawba County, NC, 1988), pp. 88, 91.

24. *Johann Gottfried Arends Diary, 1776-1801*, in German, from several pages, some not numbered in transcription. Hereinafter referenced *Arends Diary*. Anne W. McAllister and James W. Miller, Jr., "A List of Children of Settlers of German Descent in Central North Carolina, 1783-1792," *North Carolina Genealogical Society Journal*, August 1987, pp. 142-143, cited from additional pages from the *Arends Diary*, that were discovered many years later. In November 1792, the surnames of Stein, Eisenhauer, Folbrecht, Klein, Killian, and Junt are listed as first time communicants at South Fork.

25. This certificate is seen in several early Catawba County histories, and the original possibly resides at the Catawba County Historical Museum. The Hunsucker house still exists, and is occupied by the George Lafone family, current (1995) members of St. John's.

26. Paul Henkel Journal, 1801-1803, p. 127. Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. This journal is in German, and the quotation is a translation, with the gracious assistance of Dr. Richard H. Baur, Forest City, IA. Baur's translation was not used verbatim, due to a few slight variances in meanings which would not have applied. Excerpting from the German: "... das prächtigste Gebäude im Land das ich noch jemals in diesen Lande gesehen haben. ... sehr Räumlich."

more than half the size of the first floor, had a "goblet" pulpit, entered by a little stairway from the rear, and in it the minister was in position to address the audience on both floors. The slaves sat in the gallery. This pulpit was a real work of art in workmanship. Every plank and every nail used in this building of this church and of this pulpit was made by hand.²⁷

... After it was weatherboarded on the outside and ceiled on the inside, the stranger at worship would not have known that he was in a log building.²⁸

The size however would indicate that it was not built when the congregations were yet small, the modern appearance moreover that it did not come from a period far beyond the beginning of the present century, while the fact that John Rader, John Isenhower, and John Delt [?Delt?] made the pulpit and Paulsey [Polser] and Barnet Sigmon made the nails for the church, makes it certain that the first church was built about 1800 ...²⁹

During the early nineteenth century and continuing well into the twentieth century, it was custom that the men sat on the right side of the church and the women on the left. The slaves sat in the gallery on "the side next to the cemetery."³⁰

The detailed description of a pulpit confirms that this structure was originally intended to be a church, and not a Dutch Meeting House, which might now be called a community center.

Smith also described the first church adequately enough to place its style and architecture similar to the existing (1996) Old St. Paul's Church, which is also a log structure, has been weather-boarded, has been ceiled, has similar gallery, and once had a pulpit of similar description. So, it seems that the St. Paul's congregation appreciated the function, appearance, and general layout of the original St. John's building when they eventually constructed their new church, circa 1817.

If the origins of the first church are not preserved with absolute clarity, those of the first St. John's School are even more sketchy. It is known, however, that an early parochial school was established. The earliest Lutheran Pastor Arends was trained in Germany as a school teacher. It is highly probable that he taught sessions of school in the northern part of Old Lincoln County; otherwise, a considerable amount of teaching was conducted in the homes or by others, as most of the next generation were able to read and write (in either German, English, or both languages). Later pastors, Philip and David Henkel, continued the emphasis on education of the youth. Philip helped organize Pleasant Retreat Academy in Lincolnton, and very likely conducted classes around his home near St. John's by 1812, although not a single record can be found to substantiate this statement. Later, he founded a short-lived seminary in Tennessee, and gave favorable reports of the successes of his parochial schools in that State.³¹ Brother David conducted school classes at St. John's, and the textbooks were usually of a religious nature.³² Later pastors also served as School Masters, often during their preparation for the ministry, and an occasional reference is made to the school known as St. John's.³³

How could such a large congregation have been formed in a mere five years -- from 1798 to 1803, when long-established churches were not described similarly by Paul Henkel? Circumstantial evidence indicates that the

27. C. O. Smith, "Pastor Turns History's Pages Nearly 150 Years to Review Church's Past," *Hickory Daily Record* (May 14, 1949), as presented during the cornerstone-laying ceremony for the church that burned a year later. Hereinafter referenced *Smith, 1949*. C. O. Smith, "A Historical Sketch," *The Newton Enterprise*, (Friday, 26 May 1899), article based on his presentation at the Centennial Celebration on May 20, 1899. Hereinafter referenced *Smith, 1899*.

28. *Smith, 1951*.

29. *Smith, 1899*.

30. Letter from Val Fox to Mebane. RCC: I have no idea who these people are and where this letter is located.

31. *NC Synod Minutes, 1816*, p. 4, Transl.: "Mr. Philip Henkel reported on that occasion, that he views the establishment of such schools in his 5 congregations crowned with such benefits, that within 12 months that 260 children have learned to read."

32. Philip Henkel to Solomon Henkel, 4 Oct 1819, German, Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, 8653-i, Box 2, 1819-1823, 1829. Transl.: "Tomorrow I will travel to Frederick Hoke at St. John's Church, where the brother [David] conducts teaching." There are numerous letters where David Henkel ordered large quantities of Catechisms and a Henkel Press Publication, *ABC Book*, or in German, *ABC Buch*. This primer included religious topics, and was published in both languages.

33. Later Pastors P. C. Henkel and J. M. Smith mention teaching at St. John's School. The latter may have taught there after it became publicly supported, but there is little question that religious themes were taught by Smith. P. C. Henkel also mentions being taught in Moser's School, which referred to either Rev. Daniel Moser or one of his sons. This suggests a parochial school was also established at or near St. Peter's, and was served by a pastor. Moser also placed orders for *ABC Bücher*, always in German.

united congregations existed prior to 1798, and that their combined size was already of large numbers by the turn of the century. It also indicates that Arends, Loretz, or possibly, Miller, were the first pastors.

In summary, at a time after 1794, St. John's Lutheran and German Reformed congregations were organized, by 1798 they owned land, and sometime about 1800 (certainly prior to 1803), "the most magnificent building" was constructed. The St. John's "Union" Church was well established, and the sharing of title to the property remained until well into the twentieth century.

The formation of St. John's was more than simply the construction of a Church. It represented the establishment of a viable community in northern Lincoln County, and the church became the center of community life. In addition to its religious responsibilities, the Church Council occasionally accepted a more secular role, and was not unlike a municipal Board of Aldermen. As a tribunal, councilmen found themselves adjusting petty disagreements among their members. They also served as a Board of Education, hired teachers, and approved the use of textbooks. As such, St. John's was undeniably intertwined with the inevitable language transition of the locale, as the selection or approval of pastors, teachers, textbooks, and religious books significantly affected this transition. The German settlers along Lyle's Creek and the bend of the Great Catawba had taken full control of their own destiny, had established an intricate organizational structure founded on religious principles, had promoted the establishment of an educational system, and had constructed an edifice that visibly boasted these accomplishments for miles around.

Soon after its organization, St. John's became the most prominent German congregation and one of the most important German communities west of the Catawba River! Read on, if you don't believe it yet! And draw your own conclusions.

For now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there forever: and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. 2 Chronicles 7:16

Chapter 4

CALL TO THE HENKELS

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! Romans 10:14-15.

The verses above accurately describe the state of the German ministry in the Lincoln County area just after the turn of the century. Competent German pastors were in short supply in the south, although Arends, Loretz, and the English Miller were still ministering to their congregations in Lincoln County. By 1801, Arends was described as "nearly blind," and by 1803, "almost totally blind."¹

As early as 1798, Reverend Paul Henkel, from New Market, Virginia, received a Call on three occasions to the ministry of the Lutherans in the Rowan County area. He cited, "This last letter made a deep impression on me as it described the sad condition of the church in general in North Carolina." He accepted, and arrived in 1800.² He was also a missionary pastor of the Pennsylvania Ministerium and was obliged to make a report of his activities. His report was included in the 1801 minutes:

... he reports, how he found people in great ignorance - the form of Christianity was still to be found - he hopes that he shall not work in vain, especially with the youth.³

At least partly on behalf of the St. John's Lutheran congregation, a letter from Reverend Carl Storch to Dr. Velthusen on February 23, 1803 explains the plight of Arends and the Lutherans west of the Catawba River:

The congregations at the Catawba River are without a preacher. The faithful brother, Ahrend (Arends), has become totally blind. It's a sad calamity for that good man and his churches.⁴

Storch also relates the religious conditions in another letter of the same year:

Party spirit has risen to a fearful height. The prevalence of infidelity, the contempt of the best of all religions, its usages and servants, the increase of irreligion and crime, have occasioned me many sad hours.⁵

To combat these negative influences and the revivalism that had become prevalent, to provide for an orderly method of obtaining ministers within this country, and to attempt to satisfy the difficulties of the Catawba, Paul Henkel was instrumental in the arrangement of a meeting of several Lutheran congregations and their pastors, on May 2, 1803, in Salisbury. Attempts at a pastoral conference between the Lutheran Pastors in North and South Carolina had been made as early as 1787, but this was not accomplished.⁶ The earliest known meeting of the

1. Fincke's, *Paul Henkel Journal*, pp. 27, 44.

2. *Ibid*, pp. 19-23.

3. Board of Public Education, General Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in north America, *Documentary History of the Evangelical Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States - Proceedings of the Annual Conventions from 1748 to 1821. Compiled and Translated from Records in the Archives and from Written Protocols*, (Philadelphia, 1898), p. 319, hereinafter referenced *PA Synod Minutes*.

4. Bernheim, p. 348.

5. Wolf, p. 280.

6. *Helmsstaedt Reports*, p. 123.

Lutheran pastorate in North Carolina occurred a few years later, as Pastors Nussman, Arends, Roschen, Storch, Bernhardt, and Virginia Pastor Stanger met as early as October 1791, for their "first semi-annual Assembly." Apparently no formal organization was instituted, and results of these early meetings are unclear and scantily documented.⁷

At the 1803 meeting, they created a formal organization, named the "Synod of the Lutheran and Protestant Episcopal Church". The probable attendees (per historian Bernheim) were Second Creek (Organ) of Rowan County, **St. John's of Lincoln County**, Reformation, St. Luke's of Davidson County, Pilgrim, Richland, St. Paul's of Alamance County, Lau's, Frieden's, Beck's, and Nazareth. Ministers present at this organizational meeting were Miller, Storch, Henkel and Arends. Reverend Arends was elected the first President and Miller, Secretary. So not only was St. John's first pastor the first Lutheran ordained in North Carolina, he was the first President of the North Carolina Synod. St. Paul's, Daniels, Emmanuel, Grace, Zion, Biverdam, and other congregations of Old Lincoln County were notably absent, but specific record of congregational attendees is not known to exist, and therefore, subject to Dr. Bernheim's insight from a century ago.⁸

Discussion of the clergy who were present at this meeting assists in the understanding the somewhat inconsistent state of the Lutheran Church in North Carolina, and provides a background for upcoming events. As stated, Reverend Robert Johnson Miller was not brought up in the Lutheran Church, but rather was the Methodist-Episcopalian licentiate ordained in 1794. Reverend Carl Storch was then ministering to the Lutherans in Cabarrus County, and was one of the pastors from the Helmstaedt Society. North Carolina-born Paul Henkel was associated with the Pennsylvania Ministerium, had been a missionary in the Virginia frontier, and later returned to North Carolina. He was self-educated in the basics of Lutheran theology, and had become so proficient in his doctrinal beliefs that he would not back down from theological debates with those who attacked his positions.⁹ The German-born, former school-teacher, Arends requires no further introduction.

On October 17, 1803, in Lincolnton, the new Synod convened. The meeting commenced with divine services on the previous Saturday morning, with a sermon by Pastor Storch. This was followed by a sermon from Paul Henkel. On Sunday, after worship services, Communion was administered in German and English by Pastors Henkel and Miller, since they had brought their ministerial gowns to the meeting. Miller followed with an English sermon.¹⁰

On Monday morning at 9 o'clock, the assembly gathered in the church, and it was agreed to organize a Synod.¹¹

They established a constitution, and it was signed by Robert J. Miller, Carl Storch, Paulus (Paul) Henkel, Christopher Bernhardt, and Ludwig Markert.¹² That Arends did not sign the constitution is possibly due to his physical infirmity. This meeting must have had its linguistic difficulties, as Storch and Bernhardt were well educated in Germany and likely spoke what is known as "high" German. However, Storch was versed in five languages, including both English and German. Arends had lived in North Carolina for nearly twenty years, and had begun to assume a mixed language by adding German prefixes and suffixes to English words, and likewise, occasionally attached an English ending to a German word.¹³ There were also three or four English delegates present. Multi-lingual Paul Henkel recalled the dilemma somewhat humorously:

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 261-262.

8. Bernheim, 358, 374. This list was admittedly speculative on the part of Bernheim. Several questions arise. One might question that Killian's Settlement and White Haven were also charter members due to the presence of Pastors Arends and Miller, respectively. Also, as the next meeting was held in Lincolnton, one can make a strong argument that Emmanuel Church was also represented at the early meeting. Later movements by Paul Henkel strongly imply that St. John's was definitely represented. At the time of Bernheim's history, none of these Lincoln churches were members of the North Carolina Synod, and it is difficult for this author to believe that only St. John's represented all of Lincoln County.

9. Bernheim & Cox, pp. 18-19. *Paul Henkel Autobiography*.

10. Paul to Solomon, 31 Oct 1803, German, UVA, 8653-i, Box 1, 1803-1804, Letters from Paul Henkel.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Bernheim & Cox, pp. 26-28.

13. Gehrke, pp. 3-4, 14.

We met some difficulties as Pastor Miller is an English minister and in connection with our Synod, there were a number of English speaking delegates present. The journal was kept in English, and as a consequence the speech of the members was sometimes English and sometimes German. I know too well upon whom the burden of translation and interpretation fell.¹⁴

Henkel was obliged to repeat the entire discussions to the audience in both German and English.¹⁵

Nevertheless, Henkel was also proud of the achievements, when he stated, "The foundation of the institution was laid to which up to the present time parts of a building have been added."¹⁶

With the new constitution, the churches in North Carolina became the third Lutheran Synod in the Country, and the only Synod serving southern Lutherans.

In 1806, Paul Henkel wrote of Arends' health:

The Lutheran congregations were served by the Rev. Gottfried Arends for twenty years. For the past four years he became unfitted for his calling as he met with the misfortune of losing his eyesight entirely. He is at present quite an aged man, and were it not for his misfortune, he might still serve in his holy calling.¹⁷

Family history suggests that in the meantime, Arends was aided by his wife or one of his daughters, who performed his reading duties during his early period of blindness. Perhaps this allowed some meager form of ministry to continue.¹⁸ It is also quite likely that church Deacons and Elders performed many of the preaching and reading functions to the congregations during this period, and there were available services from Pastor Loretz and the English-speaking Miller.

Arends met his heavenly reward on July 9, 1807, and was buried beside the Church (later Emmanuel's) in Lincoln. Eventually, when the church was re-built his grave was situated under the pulpit of the new church. His body was exhumed in 1938 so the church could be demolished in the name of progress, and his remains now rest in the cemetery next to the original location of this church.¹⁹ His memorial headstone was placed over his grave in 1953, on the 150th anniversary of the Synod. It is inscribed in German, and the translation reads:

Here rests the body of the Rev. Johann Gottfried Arends. Having been a true Evangelical preacher, and died July the 9th, at the age of 66 years, six months and 28 days, of a kind of consumptive disease, after faithfully administering the office of preacher for 32 years.

'Blessed are all those that die, like thou'
They to the rest of Heaven, shall come.

Below, in English is written:

Remember, man, as you pass by,
as you are now, so once was I;
as I am now, you soon shall be,
therefore prepare to follow me.

An eagle, thirteen stars, and the motto of the then new republic, "E Pluribus Unum", are testament to his patriotism.

Family legend exists that Arends and Loretz were good friends with much mutual respect. They entered into an agreement, that upon death of one, the survivor would officiate the funeral service. Since Arends died in 1807 and Loretz in 1812, it is presumed that Loretz would have acted in accordance with Arends' wishes. As Philip

14. Fincke's, *Paul Henkel Journal*, p. 46.

15. Paul to Solomon, cited above.

16. Fincke's *Paul Henkel Journal*, p. 44.

17. Bernheim, p. 369.

18. Lena Brown, in article dated 1940, *Lincoln County News*.

19. Stewart Atkins, "Move Remains of Lincoln Minister after 131 Years," *Gaston Gazette*, July 12, 1938, and transcr. by Sara Grissop, *Footprints in Time*, Vol. IV, Year 6, (Gaston-Lincoln Genealogy Society: 1992-1993).

Henkel and Robert Miller were also present during this era, no documentation can be found to verify whether Arends' funeral was actually performed by Loretz, Henkel, Miller, or all three.²⁰

When the North Carolina pastors and deputies met in May 1803, Arends's health problems were among the first matters of business. It was resolved that Paul Henkel "should make a circuit through his [Arends'] congregations and perform the necessary ministerial acts."²¹

What started out as a routine decision on the part of the Synod became a resolution of great significance to St. John's and the churches west of the Great Catawba River. Although Paul Henkel has been briefly described previously, it is proper that he be more fully documented, as he became the second Lutheran Pastor at St. John's.

Paul Henkel was born in Rowan County, in the area that later became Davie County, in 1754, and his father's property bordered that of Daniel Boone's father. Henkel is the first Lutheran pastor born in North Carolina who ever preached a sermon in this state. He was the oldest son of Jacob and Barbara Dieter Henkel, who had migrated from Pennsylvania to North Carolina. His grandfather was John Justice Henkel, and his great-grandfather was Rev. Anthony Jacob Henckel, who was exiled from his native country because of his religious beliefs, immigrated to the United States in 1717, and was possibly the first of the "high-German" Lutheran pastors in this country. Tracing Henkel family history further reveals Count Henkel von Donnersmark, in Germany, who was a descendant of Rev. Johann Henkel, D. D., LL. D.. Rev. Johann Henkel was a contemporary of Martin Luther, and was appointed by Luther to the court of Queen Maria Theresa, the mother of Maria Antoinette, who died by guillotine during the French Revolution. The reason for such examination of this family is to demonstrate the long line of Pastors and nobility/education -- back to the time of the Protestant reformation in 1517. It is from this family and religious basis that the name "Henkel" became important to Lutheranism in the Catawba Valley.²²

Although Henkel was born in North Carolina, his family was forced to flee due to conflicts with the Indians. His family lived for periods of time in Virginia, Maryland, and current West Virginia. During continued troubles with Indians, he and his family lived inside the walls of a fort for a three year period. During this period of wandering, his family found itself living in German as well as English settlements; therefore, when schools were available, Paul Henkel received his early education from instructors of and in both languages.²³ This proved to be of significant importance to his later divine service.

Paul Henkel's children require a brief description, as many were important to the church of the next generations. Solomon was a physician and pharmacist and founded a printing business in New Market, Virginia. This press was extremely important to the Lutheran church in the early nineteenth century, and became the vehicle of many Lutheran translations from German to English. John was called into the ministry by congregations in North Carolina, but unexpectedly died before he assumed this service. Philip was ordained by the North Carolina Synod, and soon thereafter, went to work at St. John's. Ambrose also became a Lutheran pastor, married the daughter of St. John's member, Frederick Hoke, and became a son-in-law of St. John's, although he moved to Virginia soon thereafter. Andrew became licensed by the North Carolina Synod in 1814 and preached in Ohio. Paul Henkel's fifth son, David, later became pastor at St. John's, is buried in its cemetery, and is more fully detailed in a later chapter. The youngest son, Charles, was ordained by the Ohio Synod in 1819, where he served the Lord until his death. One daughter, Hannah Rosena, married Lutheran Pastor John N. Stirewalt, and was mother of another remarkable series of Lutheran pastors.²⁴ Stirewalt was ordained at St. John's.

Pastor Paul Henkel was the ultimate in a Lutheran missionary. He was licensed to preach by the Pennsylvania Synod in 1783 and fully ordained by this body in 1792.²⁵ And the newly formed North Carolina Synod pressed Henkel into further missionary service to assist Arends' congregations west of the Catawba. From Henkel's journal, he documents compliance with this request:

20. *Ibid*, Sarah Grissop commentary on article, pp. 126-128.

21. Bernheim, p. 374. Bernheim & Cox, p. 155. Stirewalt's, *NC Synod Minutes*, 1803.

22. Rucker, pp. 91-92.

23. *Paul Henkel Autobiography*, transl., pp. 1-4.

24. William Edward Eisenberg, *The Lutheran Church in Virginia, 1717-1962, including an Account of the Lutheran Church in Tennessee*, (Roanoke, VA: Trustees of the Virginia Synod, 1967), pp. 92-93.

25. *PA Synod Minutes*, pp. 187-188, 247.

On August 4th, I rode off to fulfill my service in Pastor Arends' congregations resolved upon at our conference. . . . There were seven congregations in which I was to preach.²⁶

This trip took Henkel to eastern Lincoln County, near Pastor Arends' home, where he and Arends delivered preparatory sermons. He spent the night in Arends' home. The following day, they returned to "this old half broken down building" and were met by a large crowd. This is likely the old "Ore Bank" Church in the Killian's Settlement. As a testament to Arends' dedication to his congregations, during the communion service, the totally blind Arends distributed the bread, and Henkel, the wine.²⁷

On Monday, Henkel preached a funeral service, and spent that night with Jacob Fullenwider, owner of an iron business near the old "ore bank." Fullenwider graciously supplied four new shoes for Henkel's horse. On Tuesday, Henkel traveled to Lincolnton but was disappointed that the people had not received enough notice to attend his sermon. The notices had been for preaching at "so-called John's church" [*Johanes Kirche*] the following weekend. Henkel faced a dilemma:

I was more than 20 miles from John's Church. I did not know the way there. No one wanted to venture to tell me where I might find it. No officer appeared. Oh, you light-minded people!²⁸

Finally, a former Elder assisted Henkel, and they rode to his house, about half way between Lincolnton and St. John's. To Henkel's surprise, this Elder owned a copy of the Augsburg Confession, but Henkel felt his host had "no correct understanding" of it, and they discussed and disputed many subjects. The Elder and his family accompanied Paul Henkel to Zion Church, where again, he was met by a small turnout. He spent that night with an Englishman who had been married to two German wives. The next day, his attendance included only eight men and one little girl. He described them as "half wild and wholly drunk," yet he preached a sermon anyway.²⁹

He was met there by an officer of St. John's, who invited him home. "In him I found a respectable, sensible and very thoughtful man to whom being pious as well as finding salvation were very serious things." The following Saturday morning, Paul Henkel described his first visit to *Johanes Kirche* in the glowing terms mentioned in the previous Chapter.³⁰

He delivered a preparatory sermon and examined the congregation. Henkel believed that the people felt the act of communion was very important, and it produced a stir and attentiveness in them.³¹

On the following day, Henkel returned to administer the sacrament. When he arrived, he described the assembly as "a horrible crowd." "Ah, where did the people come from? Where are we to put them?" In one respect, he was gratified at the large turnout, but Henkel also expressed his displeasure that more people had not been present on Saturday. When a man approached Pastor Henkel to have his child baptized, he was admonished that if he were a righteous man, he would have been present on Saturday. Henkel then turned to the remainder of the congregation: "I told the rabble that all disorderly riffraff could come into the church on Sunday, especially when communion would be celebrated, but righteous people could come into the church on work days in order to hear the sermons."³² The people could then easily distinguish the righteous, due to their presence or absence on Saturday.

Pastor Henkel related that he had been born in North Carolina,

26. Fincke's, *Paul Henkel Journal*, pp. 44-45.

27. Paul Henkel Journal, 1801-1803, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. Mscr. transl. by Dr. Richard H. Baur. Journal pp. 120-128 gives the complete account of this trip through Lincoln County.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.* The English host who had married two German wives was likely Jesse Robinson. Intermarriage between the languages was not very common. Undoubtedly, Paul Henkel thought it was unusual, or he would not have written it in his journal.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*

... and if they should go to sleep during my sermon, it would be a loss to them and to me, etc.. All this served to make the people attentive, and I could speak to the people with greater cheerfulness. The whole congregation was very attentive and quiet. Many seemed very moved, and many tears flowed. I served Holy Communion and with that the work for this day concluded.³³

That evening, several neighbors visited Henkel, and he "found the opportunity to make remarks about the superstitious and absurd views of our Germans who try so hard to be in fashion." He was asked to make another visit and preach the same kind of sermon. "I must give them credit," he remembered in his Journal. Henkel departed on Monday morning and arrived home in Rowan County on Tuesday night.³⁴

This record of a communion service, contained in one of Paul Henkel's Journals, marks the year 1803 as the first documented service of the Lord's Supper conducted by an ordained Lutheran minister at St. John's, and he suggests that it may have been quite some time since the congregation had been served by a Lutheran pastor.³⁵ Arends' Journal appears incomplete for the preceding decade, and any administration of the sacrament is unknown. If Reformed Pastor Loretz served the congregation, particularly during Arends' failing health, it is likely that Reformed and Lutheran partook the Lord's body and blood side by side; however, the ministerial record of Loretz cannot be located for verification.

In 1804, further requests went out for assistance for aged and debilitated Arends from Lutheran churches west of the Catawba. As the newly-formed Synod could not immediately respond with a full-time pastor, Paul Henkel was again approached:

... it followed that on March 5th I was visited by a man with a long letter in which I was ordered to move my son Philip from his present field to the congregations served by Pastor Arends on the Catawba in Lincoln County. Pastor Arends had himself with many others signed the petition.³⁶

At this time, Pastor Henkel did not feel his son had enough experience to tackle such a charge and was not in favor of him moving to Lincoln County.³⁷

Rather, Paul Henkel, himself, accepted the responsibility of providing service to the Lutherans west of the Catawba, beginning his trip on May 1:

We traveled to Lincoln Court House and from there to the so-called St. John's Church. Here Mr. Sherer and I preached to a large congregation. I preached also in English. . . . In the same congregation, I preached to a large congregation in the previous month of August [1803] and administered the Lord's Supper, and learned on my second visit that my service had been a blessing, for the people not only showed themselves to be glad but were more devout and attentive. Many of them were deeply touched.³⁸

From the quote above, much information is obtained. First, the Christians at St. John's heard two German sermons, and then one English one, suggesting German was still the preferred language in 1804. Secondly, Henkel's journal remembered St. John's as a "large congregation" in 1803 -- a description infrequently used by him, and not used to describe other area congregations.

On their return trip, Paul says, "Sherer rode again to St. John's Church, and I rode along the road direct to Lincoln Court House."³⁹

Jacob Sherer was a young "assistant" pastor, or "catechist", who was taken under the senior pastor's care for purposes of theological instruction in the era before seminaries. This is his only known association with the Lutherans at St. John's. He later served the Synod as a missionary, became ordained in 1810, and became an early leader of the Lutheran Church in South Carolina.⁴⁰

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

36. Fincke's, *Paul Henkel Journal*, p. 50.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*, p. 51.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

40. Bernheim, p. 376.

On this trip, Paul Henkel encountered the Reformed Pastor Samuel Weyberg preaching in the Burke County area, and stopped to listen to a sermon. Henkel was not overly complimentary.⁴¹ However, the presence of Weyberg and Loretz, two Reformed Pastors, suggests considerable strength in the Reformed Church in the area.

During this trip, Paul reconsidered the requests from the Catawba congregations for son Philip's services, but felt it should be delayed until after the Synod meeting.⁴²

And again, in August of the same year, Paul Henkel made an extended visit to St. John's:

... I had to make a trip to St. John's Church in Lincoln County in order to give the youth the instruction promised long ago. I left home on horseback Friday, August 3rd, and arrived at the other side of the North Catawba River about sundown.

On Sunday the 4th, I rode 7 miles to the church and found a very large gathering of people. On Monday, I began catechetical instruction for the young people. Several enemies of the truth and opponents of the welfare of the church had sown their seeds among the people to hinder me in my work but they met with no success as in several days I had as many as 60 young people in my class under instruction, among them several married folks. I had my lodging place one mile from the church with Henry Yund [Yount], a deacon of the congregation. This christian family I desire to remember as long as I live. It seemed as though the spirit of peace rested on husband, wife and children. A son and daughter accompanied me to the instruction. Wednesday the 8th, I held a funeral sermon in the church, on which occasion I was thoroughly drenched by a cloudburst that overtook us on the way to church.⁴³

Can anyone with the slightest current knowledge of St. John's imagine a confirmation class of sixty persons in 1804?!? Until further records to the contrary come forth, this stands as the largest known confirmation class in the history of the Church. First of all, it is probable that confirmation had not been held in the area for several years, due to Arends' failing health. Also, the large, new, building at St. John's could have been the central location from several area Churches, as this was Henkel's only reported confirmation class in the geographical area.

If the quotes above were not sufficient to prove Pastor Paul Henkel's presence, the following German record from one of Paul Henkel's early notebooks provides the names of these confirmands in the German language:

Folgenden personen wurden confirmirt und eingefuegt en Der St. Johane's Kirche Lincoln County Nord Carolina Im 18ten August 1804.

[Following persons were confirmed and united in St. John's Church Lincoln County North Carolina on 18th of August 1804.]

1Daniel Ebly	1Barbara Vollbrecht
2Daniel Carr	2Elisabeth Braun
3Henrich Miller	3Susana Vollbrecht
4Leonard Kegel	4Margreth Arendt
5Henrich Price ??	5Ana Maria Klein
6Philip Hedrich	6Elisabeth Anthony
7Daniel Eisenhaur	7Catharina Carr
8Johan Klein	8Elisabeth Vollbrecht
9Henrich Menges	9Elisabeth Samet
10Jacob Little	10Sigman [no first name given]
11Jacob Vollbrecht	11Barbara Schmit
12Johanes Jund	12Barbara Siegman
13Georg Kubler [?Keebler?]	13Elisabeth Hedrich
14Abraham Hahn	14Susana Menges
15Johanes Klein	15Margreth Menges

41. Paul to Solomon, 16 May 1804, UVA, 8653-i, Box 1, Folder 1803-1804. Weyberg was identified by the following text: "Und nach mir predigte Mr. Weinberg ein Reformirt Prediger, ein Sohn das Pferer Weinberg welcher viele Jahre Prediger in Philadelph worden." Samuel Weyberg preached in the Guilford/Randolph County areas for a few years, and must have served in the Lincoln/Burke area for a brief period, before moving to Missouri. He is generally not listed as a pastor here.

42. *Ibid*, "Ob der Philip in diese Gegend kommen wird, die Kirchen Dienste zu versehen wies ich nicht wird erst bis die nächste Conferenz nit scheiden."

43. Fincke's, *Paul Henkel Journal*, p. 54. Emphasis added by the author. No tombstone dated 1804 could be found by this author in the cemetery.

16 William Taylor	16 Barbara Whittenburg
17 Daniel Sigman	17 Magdalena Tritt
18 Johan Delb ??	18 Elisabeth Fisher
19 Henrich Legel	19 Ana Maria Hahn
20 Jacob Tritt	20 Susana Eisenhaur
21 Daniel Vollbrecht	21 Margret Hollman [?Kollman?]
22 Martin Eisenhaur	22 Judith Rein
23 Jacob Probst	23 Ella [?Etta?] Eisenhaur
24 Adam Klein	24 Catharina Jund
25 Johan Samet	25 Elisabeth Eisenhaur
26 John Jonston	26 Catharina Noll
	27 Sarah Diets(z)
	28 Margreth Geir
	29 Catharina Geir
	30 Christina Lorents
	31 Magdalena Sips ?????
	32 Christina Sips ?????
	33 Elisabeth Legel
	34 Magdalena Lorenz44

As a surname refresher, Vollbrecht became Fulbright, Lagel became Lail, Lorenz and Lorents became Lowrance, and Jund became Yount. The other names are recognizable.

This valuable document becomes the **earliest-known congregational record** of St. John's. It also marks the first documented confirmation class ever held, and contains one of the largest lists of names seen on any early confirmation list for any Lutheran church in North Carolina! In fact, sixty names exceeds the early communion lists of several of the more established congregations in North Carolina.

Moreover, the date on Henkel's arrival (August 4), and the date of confirmation (August 18) sets forth the catechetical instruction period of two straight weeks. Although not specifically noted, Holy Communion services were held after the confirmation ceremonies, and regular services were likely held on the previous Sunday.

Scrutiny of the family names in the list above indicates that there was much migration of families from "der Saut Fark" to "Johanes" around the turn of the century, as the names Anthony, Fisher, Hahn, Jund, Killian, Klein, Miller, Minges, Probst, Siegman, Schmit, Tritt, Vollbrecht, and Whittenberg appear on Arends' early communion lists and Henkel's list above. The names of Hahn and Geir also appear on earlier lists at Zion.

In 1804, Paul Henkel was elected President of the North Carolina Synod. So not only was St. John's first Lutheran pastor elected to be the first Synod president, her second pastor succeeded him in this office, although Henkel never formally withdrew his connection with the Pennsylvania Ministerium.⁴⁵

Philip Henkel, son of Paul Henkel, was given "permission to preach" at the same 1804 Synod meeting, but it was not until 1805 that he became ordained by the Synod at Pine Church in Rowan County, and was soon dispatched to Lincoln County as an assistant to Pastor Arends during the last years of one of the St. John's patriarchs. Philip Henkel had studied theology during the winter and spring of 1801 in York, Pennsylvania. That fall he and his new bride returned to North Carolina, and he soon began his ministry.⁴⁶

For family health reasons, Paul Henkel relocated to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, and resumed his ministry under the guidance of the Pennsylvania Ministerium. He was their primary missionary for many years.

44. Paul Henkel Notebook, German, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University, no page numbers. The notebook is not in perfect condition, somewhat tattered, and loose at the bindings. Henkel's script and style is very difficult to decipher in places, and the notebook apparently survived the cloudburst, therefore, transcription and translation errors probably exist in the names listed above. The 1804 visit is the only listing of St. Johannes's names (or others from Catawba County). The list and Paul Henkel's report about Henry Yount prove that John Yount and Catherina Yount were Henry Yount's children.

45. Bernheim, p. 375.

46. Bernheim, p. 369. Harvey Huntley, Jr., *Lutherans in Greene County: A Bicentennial History*, manuscript, p. 18. Eisenberg, p. 112.

But the Lincoln County congregations had not forgotten him, and considered a Call in 1806.⁴⁷ That year, he was appointed "traveling preacher" by Pennsylvania. In later years, he was again commissioned as "traveling preacher," but specifically to the states of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. In 1811, he was appointed to the German settlements of Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee, with the stipulation that he have "no dealings with camp meetings." And still later, he was given free reign to travel wherever he thought it necessary. During the period between 1806 and 1813, Paul Henkel was usually the sole missionary from this Synod, and was paid from \$30 to about \$100 per year for these efforts, depending upon his time on the dirt trail.⁴⁸ He maintained contact and was a regular attendee at the North Carolina Synod, and appeared at St. John's from time to time, with one of his sons.

Paul Henkel's prominence was brief at St. John's, and ended in 1805. An historian from the nineteenth century relates his overall importance to the Lutheran Church with considerable fanfare.

No more active, indefatigable and self-denying missionary than the Rev. Paul Henkel ever labored in this country. . . . Serving at different times what might be regarded as a fixed charge at New Market, Va., and in Rowan County, N. C., he never confined himself to any such limitations. The whole surrounding country was his parish. He laid the foundations of quite a number of churches in Augusta, Madison, Pendleton and Wythe Counties, Va., and without authorization from any mission Board, and without dependence upon any missionary fund, he made repeated tours through western Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio; hunting up the lost; administering the Word and Sacraments; instructing and confirming the youth, and so far as practicable organizing new congregations. . . . He passed away from his earthly labors in 1825, but five sons took up his work in the church militant, and their honorable name, their zealous consecration to the Church and her doctrines, have been perpetuated without interruption in the Lutheran pulpit to the present day (1890).⁴⁹

In 1819, Paul Henkel and his wife left New Market, proceeded through the Shenandoah valley, through eastern Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, North Carolina again, and back to their home. The total time of this trip was five months. From June 16 through September 30, Henkel preached at least 49 sermons.⁵⁰ This clearly illustrates the missionary energies of Paul Henkel.

The first of his sons to regularly appear at St. John's was Philip Henkel, who assisted Arends until the elder's death in 1807,⁵¹ whereupon he assumed full responsibilities for ministry to the Lutheran congregations in Lincoln County. Henkel moved to Lincoln County prior to 1808, as he made a claim on two parcels of land in Lincoln County -- one of 27 acres on Indian Creek bordering Jacob Plunk and Abraham Havener (May 2, 1808), and the second, 30 acres on South Fork bordering Robert Ramsey and John Morris (May 5, 1808). He also bought land on Howard's Creek, about fifteen miles south of St. John's.⁵² These were not in the Lyle's Creek community; consequently, like Arends, Philip Henkel was still somewhat distant from his charge at St. John's. These land records, however, help confirm Henkel's regular presence west of the Catawba River, and are indications that he intended to remain. In 1811, Philip Henkel obtained two tracts of land from Bernhard Sigmon, totaling 338 acres on Lyle's Creek and Mull's Fork. He then moved near St. John's and lived near the Sigmans, the Whittenburgs, the Hokes, and the Hafners.⁵³

In 1810, Reverend Philip Henkel's pastorate was listed in the minutes of the Synod. His churches included St. John's, Old Church (Old St. Paul's), School House Church (Daniels, near Lincolnton), Kasner's (Philadelphia, now Gaston County), Lebanon (just east of Anderson Mountain, Catawba County), Emmanuel's (Lincolnton), Hebron (no longer active), and Zion's (Catawba County) -- all in Lincoln County of that day. The Elders of

47. Philip to Solomon, 1 June 1806, German, UVA of 8653-i, Box 2, 1801-1806. "Ich ihm schon in April geschrieben habe doch die hier an Catawba scheinen alle willig zu sein nur meinen die Vorsteher wolte es sich nicht schicken eine List zu machen bis zu einen Gelegenheit."

48. *PA Synod Minutes*, pp. 187, 188, 247, 389, 407, 421, 428, 442, 458. Bernheim, p. 367.

49. Wolf, pp. 308-309.

50. Eisenberg, pp. 126-132.

51. Bernheim, p. 369.

52. LCRD DB 24:153; 24:323; others.

53. LCNC DB 25:525-526. Philip sold his Howard's Creek property to Peter Hoyl in 1811: DB 28:384. Remember this Howard's Creek transaction, as the land appears later in St. John's history. One of the Lyle's Creek tracts was on Island Ford Road (same as the church), and probably less than a mile from the church.

"Johannes Kirche" were listed as Johannes Eisenhauer, Johannes Stein, Christoph Siegman, and Jacob Vollbrecht. Bernhard Siegman and Johannes Schmidt were the Deacons.⁵⁴

Little business, pertinent to St. John's, was conducted by the Synod between the years of 1805 and 1812. In 1805, catechetical instruction was set at six weeks, possibly as a reaction to Paul Henkel's two week class of the prior year. The general organization of North Carolina German congregations was reinforced in 1806, when a resolution was passed that, "It shall be allowed to each minister of our synod to give the Lord's Supper to a Christian of another denomination, who attends his congregation." This was an obvious tendency towards toleration of other Protestant denominations and the "union" church.

At the 1810 meeting, Johannes Schmidt represented the churches of Lincoln County. That a member of St. John's represented the entire body of Lutherans west of the Catawba River clearly demonstrates the Church's importance in the Lutheran community. Schmidt volunteered the facilities of St. John's for a future meeting of Synod, and his offer was accepted.⁵⁵

On the 4th Sunday in September, 1811, the "most magnificent building" of St. John's was host to the North Carolina Synod's annual conference. Peter Little was elected as delegate for St. John's, and Pastor Philip Henkel was elected secretary, where his five and one half year parochial report was listed as nine churches and 331 confirmations. Apparently, there was some misunderstanding regarding this meeting, as a few pastors did not appear until the following week; therefore, little business was conducted. Philip's brother Andrew was in attendance at the first Synod meeting at St. John's.⁵⁶

A special meeting was then scheduled for the first Sunday of April, 1812, and St. John's was again in the limelight of Lutheran churches in North Carolina. Once again, Peter Littel [sic] was the delegate from the congregation. The German minutes from these meetings were entitled, *Verhandlungen der Conferenzen der Vereinigten Evangelisch Lutherischen Prediger, und Abgeordneten, in dem Staat Nord-Carolina, Vom Jahr 1811 bis zum Jahr 1812*, and were printed by Ambrosius Henkel and Co., Shenandoah County, Virginia. At this meeting, Daniel Moser was permitted to preach in Philip Henkel's absence, "and in cases of necessity to baptize."⁵⁷

The Synod meeting of 1812 was held at Lau's Church in Guilford County, and neither Pastor nor delegate from St. John's could attend. Only Daniel Moser was in attendance from Lincoln County.⁵⁸

On Sunday, May 2, 1813, a special service was held at St. John's, with Pastors Philip Henkel and Robert J. Miller delivering sermons. This was followed by Holy Communion with 125 participants.⁵⁹

Several unrelated events of this period deeply touched the St. John's families. The political upheaval due to the War of 1812 is often overlooked. Yet this war recruited heavily throughout North Carolina, and the St. John's community was no exception. Michael Hefner, Christopher Hoffman, John Miller, Jacob Miller, Abram Killian, Christopher Lewis, and Peter Herman mustered into the Militia of North Carolina in 1812 -- some under Captains George Hoffman or Henry "Rudasill". By 1814, the following twenty-two names represent young men with connections to St. John's, who can be found on lists from the War of 1812:

Miles Abernathy

Matthias Barringer [Jr.]

George Bowman

Nicholas Carpenter [Zimmerman]

Ephraim Christoph[er]

54. N. C. Synod Minutes, 1810 shows the German spellings. Bernheim, p. 377. Bernheim & Cox, p. 37. Salem and Grace Churches were not included in this list.

55. Stirewalt's, NC Synod Minutes, 1805-1810.

56. *Verhandlungen der Conferenzen der Vereinigten Evangelisch Lutherischen Prediger, und Abgeordneten, in dem Staat Nord-Carolina, Vom Jahr 1811 bis zum Jahr 1812*, (New Market, VA: 1812), pp. 1-33. Peschau's, NC Synod Minutes, 1811/1812, pp. 14-15. Andrew witnessed a deed for Philip on 1 Oct 1811.

57. *Verhandlungen, 1811/1812*.

58. *Verhandlungen des Synod der Vereinigten Evangelischen Lutherischen Prediger, in dem Staat Nord Carolina, im October 1812*, (New Market, VA: 1813), pp. 1-16.

59. N. C. Synod Minutes, 1813, p. 28.

William Eckard
 Daniel Fullbright
 Jacob Fullbright
 Avery Gant
 John Hedrick
 Philip Hedrick
 Jacob Harman
 William Herman
 Lewis Hewitt
 Peter Hoke
 Leonard Kagle
 Benedict Levan [Lafone]
 John Mouser
 George Shook
 Joseph Shook
 Henry Sigman
 Henry Sigman, Jr.
 Daniel Summitt
 Francis Summitt
 Andrew Yount⁶⁰

Several others from the community also participated in this war, and many served under Captain Daniel Hoke, brother of Frederick, from St. John's.⁶¹

The outbreak in the South was with Shawnee Chief Tecumseh and the Creek Indians, who raided Fort Mimms, Georgia, and scalped over 500 inhabitants. Tennessee was the quickest to react, and General Andrew Jackson mustered a large army and marched in the direction of the uprising. The Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi Militias joined Jackson's forces, and they defeated the Indians at the Battle of Horse Shoe Bend in Alabama.⁶²

The Western North Carolina troops mustered at Salisbury on February 1, 1814, marched under General Joseph Graham to Fort Hawkins, Georgia, and arrived by the end of March. By the time they reached Alabama, Jackson's troops had claimed the victory. The North Carolinians could only help in gathering up the scattered warriors, and they assisted in construction of four forts along the Alabama River. They began their return on June 25, and arrived back in North Carolina by the middle of August, with few casualties and injuries. Generally, this marked the conclusion of local participation in the War, but still served to disrupt many households during the prime agricultural season.⁶³

In late July of 1814, Philip Henkel made an extended trip to Tennessee with his parents and two children. During this absence, coupled with the absence of men due to the war effort, the most destructive natural disaster in memory struck the region. The western Piedmont was engulfed by a major flood on July 29th.⁶⁴ As most preferred to build their houses near the creeks and streams for ready access to the water, many homes along Lyle's Creek were severely damaged by the flood, or completely destroyed.⁶⁵

60. *Muster Rolls of the Soldiers of the War of 1812 Detached from the Militia of North Carolina, in 1812 and 1814*, (Raleigh: Times Office, 1851); Repr. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1976), 52-54, 129-131. Names were compared to various St. John's lists, and the Lincoln County Censuses of 1810 through 1830.

61. *Ibid.*, including Casper Bolick, Christian Bollinger, Matthias Booby, John Cowan, Peter Keller, Peter Lowrance, Aaron Townsend, and others.

62. *Ibid.* Presslar, pp. 214-218. Ashe's *History of North Carolina*, p. 235.

63. *Ibid.*

64. Ambrose to Solomon, 3 Aug 1814, German, UVA, 8653-i, Box 1, 1801-1818, 1824, Letters from Ambrose Henkel. During this period, Ambrose was living in the area near St. John's, and witnessed the flood's devastation. He also reports the birth of a son.

65. Examples of house location near waterways are the Henry Pope house at the foot of St. John's Church hill, Frederick Hoke house (standing) at the Old Rock Barn, Theobald Hunsucker house (standing), Bert Hunsucker house (near Lyle's Creek, but moved log by log to Dr. Hart's farm in Catawba County), Frederick Smith's first house (near the branch behind the current house), John Smith's house (near County Home Road and

Philip's brother, Ambrose, reported his observations to New Market. Travel and commerce were inhibited, as the rivers and creeks were swollen, and many bridges were destroyed. Ambrose believed every gristmill in Iredeell County had washed away from its foundations, and only one remained in the, then-large, Buncombe County. In Lincoln, most mills had been devastated, but one was totally reconstructed in less than six days, and grain poured in from all neighboring localities. If the mill ran day and night, it could not have met the demands of the people.⁶⁶

Ambrose Henkel predicted there would be a famine in the area, as the recently-harvested wheat crop could not be ground into flour. He described the Welsh corn [*Welschkorn*], grown in the fertile bottom land along the creeks and tributaries, as washed away. He described the fences in these lowlands similarly, which would have subjected any surviving crops to the intrusion and further ruination by roaming livestock. One St. John's member's farm was identified as losing 1000 sections of fence and 30 acres of Welsh corn -- a major economic loss in any Lyle's Creek household!!!!⁶⁷

Philip Henkel returned to the area in late August, and resumed service to the churches of Lincoln County until the Synod selected him to serve the congregations that were springing up as the German migration continued westward into eastern Tennessee. In other business of that year, the Synod resolved to instruct Negro slaves as members into the church. Also,

Resolved, That all our ministers unite themselves to labor against the pernicious influences and consequences of dancing, and seek to prevent it in every possible way.⁶⁸

Philip Henkel's November departure marks the end of the first major era of St. John's.⁶⁹ During the period up to 1814, the congregation was organized, a church was built, and St. John's established itself as one of the important congregations west of the Catawba. A somewhat regular ministry had been actively pursued and obtained. The greater Lutheran church in North Carolina had organized and was making serious attempts to provide the means of grace to its congregations.

Prior to 1814, several early pioneers were interred at St. John's and many more in family graveyards. In the older section of the cemetery are at least thirty unmarked field stones, soft rocks, and monument bases, as well as several that are broken or otherwise marred. There are surely other markers that have not withstood the ravages of time, or have been lost during subsequent alignment of stones, to serve as a permanent reminder two centuries later. Of the surviving stones, the following names are identified, with several inscriptions being in the native German tongue:

John Null 1800-1800
Anna Margaretta Somerin 1733-1801
Adam Echert died 1803
Johann Drum died 1805
John Sommer 1738-1805
Anna Drum died 1808
John Little 1800-1808
Susana Wineberger died 1808
Catherine C. Heff (?Neff?) died 1810
N.O.A.S.T. (?Noah Hoke?) 1812-1812
Barbara Sigmon 1783-181370

Lyle's Creek), Wortha Herman house (standing in western Conover), etc..

66. Ambrose to Solomon, cited above.

67. *Ibid.* The farm described by Ambrose was "Father Hoke's," presumably his father-in-law, Frederick Hoke. Klaus Wust's *The Virginia Germans* defines "Welschkorn" as "Indian corn," 53.

68. Bernheim, pp. 399-400. Stirewalt's, *NC Synod Minutes*, 1814.

69. Philip to Solomon, 27 Sept 1814, UVA 8653-i, Box 2, 1814-1818. "Ich habe nichts Besonders zu melden als daß ich bis November nach Tennessee ziehen werde."

70. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, pp. 83-124. The description for Noah Hoke was obtained from a Hoke Family researcher, Jerry L.

Of interest is the name "Somerin", which like Arends's Diary and other early German documents, clearly illustrates the use of "n" or "in" for feminine genders. John Sommer and Anna Margareta Somerin, were husband and wife, although the tombstone legends may suggest different last names.

Although the names "Johann" and "Echert" appear nearly as spelled in the native tongue, it is noted that most of the post-1800 Germans had begun to anglicize their names. Particularly curious is the name "Little", which is the English definition of the German word "Klein".

The arrival of Reverend Paul Henkel in 1803 began an era of Henkel influence that continued for sixty-seven years, with only a thirteen year lapse. Along with Arends, the name "Henkel" would forever be etched into the Lutheran history of St. John's and other area Lutheran congregations.

During the era of Philip Henkel, St. John's facilities were being shared with the German Reformed's. Reverend Andrew Loretz was their pastor until 1812, when:

One quiet, Sabbath evening, after having spent the morning in his holy duties, preaching to his congregation at St. Paul's Church, he expired at his home near Lincolnton, leaving a wife [sic] and seven young children, . . . He was buried in Daniel's church yard in sight of his residence. . . . There being no other minister of his own Church South, his funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Paul Henkel, a Lutheran Divine.⁷¹

Loretz's estate papers include the inventory of four Negroes, six "horse creatures," thirty "heads of horned cattle," five sheep, thirty hogs, typical household and farm tools, and \$139.50 cash. It also mentions unpaid loans to various neighbors totaling well over \$200.00. Loretz had not only obtained much land, he also had amassed a fine farm, considerable livestock, and his family prospered.⁷²

The *Colonial Record* discusses one of Loretz's churches, "For sixteen years no Reformed pastor could be found . . . and in this time by the proselyting agency of others, this German congregation was so distracted as to have never recovered its former vitality."⁷³ The St. John's Reformed congregation was similarly ignored. For this and other reasons, the period following 1812 represented an era of dynamic growth for the Lutherans under their next pastor.

A number of "firsts" deserve repetition for emphasis. Johann Gottfried Arends was the first resident North Carolina Lutheran pastor to be ordained. He was the first president of the North Carolina Synod, and Paul Henkel, the second. Reformed Pastor Andrew Loretz was likely the first pastor of that faith at St. John's. And St. John's was, in all expert opinions, a charter member of the first Lutheran Synod in the south in 1803. The 1804 confirmation class of sixty stands as a record number for early Catawba County Churches until proven otherwise.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, . . . Matthew 28, 19

Lynn, from Raleigh. This is not proven.

71. Loretz. This is as cited by a grand-son of Pastor Loretz. It seems more likely the funeral was performed by Paul Henkel's son, Philip, who was definitely living nearby in 1812.

72. Philip Leonard, *Settlement of Estates by way of Sales, Returns, and Committees, and a few inventories listed, of Lincoln County, North Carolina, 1780 to 1812, but a few from 1760 to 1780*, typed mscr., no date. Original source not verified.

73. CR, VIII:753.

The DAVID HENKEL ERA

But the word of God grew and multiplied. Acts 12:24

With the death of Reformed Pastor Andrew Loretz in 1812, there was little ministerial influence from the German Reformed's for nearly two decades. A Mr. Boger preached at St. John's on one known occasion in 1816, and later that same year, a Mr. Houck was present. Occasional visits from German Reformed pastors are cited by other Lincoln County Reformed and Dutch Presbyterian congregations from the Reverends James Riley and John S. Ebaugh in 1818, Jacob Schull in 1819, John Rudy in 1821 and 1824, W. C. Bennet, and a Pastor Beecher. Also, Presbyterians James Hall, Dr. Humphrey Hunter, and Joseph E. Bell are listed from the period from 1812 to about 1828 or 1830. Other than Boger, Houck, and Rudy, whether any of these persons administered to the St. John's family of congregations is not known or not documented by various histories of the area German Reformed congregations; however, the local presence of these pastors suggests that the congregation at St. John's was probably visited sporadically. Joseph E. Bell, listed as a German Reformed pastor, was actually Presbyterian, and is reported to have served the congregation at Grace Church from 1820 to 1825 as a resident pastor.¹

As a consistent German Reformed pastor's influence cannot be ascertained, this chapter is presented completely on a Lutheran bias.

GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

Although David Henkel's tenure at the St. John's was terminated by his early death, the sixteen year period under his guidance was that of rapid growth, and the beginning of a return to the basis of the Lutheran confessions of faith -- the Holy Scriptures, as interpreted by the writings of Martin Luther and his followers. The era was also marked by controversy.

When Paul Henkel moved to Point Pleasant, [West] Virginia in 1811, he and his wife left son David in New Market, with his brother Solomon and the printing press, where David studied and worked as a printer's devil.²

Philip Henkel was Pastor at St. John's, when his sixteen-year-old brother, David, arrived in 1812. The younger Henkel soon left for South Carolina to sell Henkel publications and take subscriptions for upcoming books. There he began his ministerial work, under the guidance of Pastor Godfrey Dreher, and he'd soon preach his first sermon. On Friday, December 11, 1812, he was licensed by Reverends Ludwig Markert, Godfrey Dreher, and Jacob Sherer, at the age of seventeen. This allowed him to teach, preach, and perform limited ministerial duties.³

Something happened to David Henkel during this trip. The teenager began to study the Bible and other books in his possession. He must have startled his friends and family in New Market, when he sent "A Gift on Christmas," which was a long sermon he had composed himself, of which he was very proud. He described the South Carolina involvement as:

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1. Peeler, pp. 204, 214, 260. G. Shober, *Review of a Pamphlet, issued from the Press of the Western North Carolinian, in Salisbury: N. C., etc.*, (Salisbury: Bingham & White, 1821), pp. 60-62, hereinafter referenced *Shober's Review*. This publication was Schober and the N. C. Synod's response to David Henkel's *Caralman Herald of Liberty: Religious and Political, Or A Testimony Against Attempted Measures Which in their Nature Are Calculated to Lead to the Establishment of Popery among Protestants . . . in an Oration. There are also other subjects inserted in this little Work, highly interesting to the Lutheran Community*, (Salisbury: 1821), and presents Schober's opinions against Henkel. The copy seen by this author was once owned by "No. Ca. Synod." Henkel's work is hereafter cited as *Caralman Herald of Liberty: David Henkel Diary*, 1816. Two of pastors were likely George Boger and Wilhelm Houck, of the German Reformed faith. Good, p. 198.
 2. *The Henkel Family Records*, No. 14, August 1939, New Market, VA, The Henkel Press, Inc., 1939, p. 619.
 3. *David Henkel Diary, 1812. Shober's Review* incorrectly states that Philip Henkel licensed David, p. 17.

I am very much engaged at present. I am authorized to preach the gospel. I attend three large congregations. Excuse my forced style, as I have but very little practice in the English tongue as I preach altogether in German.⁴

He continued his work in South Carolina until June 1813. Dreher reported to New Market, Virginia, that "your brother David still continues to preach with us."⁵ David departed for North Carolina, to the region west of the Catawba River on June 30, and arrived at Philip's house by Saturday, July 3. The very next day, he'd find himself preaching an English sermon at his brother's congregation in Lincolnton.⁶

David Henkel obviously placed St. John's on his "preferred list", as the Lutherans near Lyle's Creek and County Road (or Oxford Ford Road), worshipped under Philip and David about once per month, and nearly always on a Sunday. The Henkel brothers often held services for two area congregations in a single day, if geography and travel permitted. David later provided sermons or assisted his brother in the Lord's Supper at Gnaden (Grace) and School House (Daniels), both in Lincoln County at that time. David Henkel's fourth locally-recorded appearance was at St. John's Church on the first Sunday of October, 1813, where he preached sermons in both German (from 1st John 2:7) and English (Gen. 19). While the English sermon was about Sodom and Gomorrah, the text for the German sermon proved to be prophetic:

Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

Catechist Henkel administered to this congregation for the remainder of this year, by participating in October and November services.⁷

By the end of 1813, Henkel was confronted with a difficult decision. He had been away from New Market for about a year and one half, and was being encouraged by his father and oldest brother, Solomon, to return and assist in the family printing business. Although this career decision might have proved more financially secure, and physically less strenuous, the condition of the Church in North and South Carolina had convinced David that his calling was to be a minister of the Gospel.⁸

David's sudden move from his South Carolina congregations to be with Philip in North Carolina had never been understood. The reason for this move is found in unpublished 1814 synod minutes. Henkel was accused of "shameful conduct towards a woman in the house of a Mr. Gates in Matthews parish Orangeburg District, S. C." He was "found guilty", censured by synod, and reprimanded by a synod committee of Gottlieb Schober and Carl Storck. David's father wanted this censure passed unanimously. "Out of regard toward his relation this censure was not published but covered by the mantle of love in hopes of amendments in the conduct of the accused."⁹

Whether this situation was known in the churches he served is unclear. There appears no lapse in his ministry. In March of 1814, David Henkel preached once at St. John's. After being married to Catharine Hoyl, daughter of "Politician" Peter Hoyl, on May 17, he returned to preach sermons in both languages on the 28th. The next day, he delivered a funeral sermon for Mrs. Hoffman. For the remainder of the year, he preached four sermons at St. John's, and baptized 6 children, with his first recorded baptism being on the third Sunday in November.¹⁰

In addition to the previously named churches, David Henkel soon served Lutz's School House (later Trinity, Vale), Forney's Old School House, Hebron, Hesle's, Casner's (Philadelphia, Gaston County), Abernathy's, "Old Church" (Old St. Paul's), Rutherford, Whitehaven (Lowesville, Gaston County, no longer active), Lebanon (now Mountain View Baptist Church, Catawba County), many individual homes, and occasional trips to other regions.¹¹

4. David Henkel, *A Gift on Christmas*, Saluda, SC, December 1812, manuscript in Alderman Library, UVA, Accession No. 8653-c.

5. Godfrey Dreher to Solomon Henkel, 14 June 1813, Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, Accession No. 8653-f, Box 1. Several letters in this same collection indicate that he was both preaching and selling books.

6. *David Henkel Diary*, 1813.

7. *Ibid.*

8. David to Solomon, 15 Jan 1814, UVA, 8653-c, Box 1, Letters from David Henkel, 1812-1815.

9. Manuscript Minutes, 1814 RGNCs 1.0.1. Folder #1, North Carolina Synod Lutheran Archives, Salisbury, N. C.

10. *David Henkel Diary*, 1814. Henkel does not state the location of the Hoffman funeral. It may or may not be at St. John's.

11. *Ibid.*, 1814-1831.

Upon the death of Charles Zacharias Henrich Schmidt, a pastor of several churches in eastern Tennessee, Philip Henkel was designated by the Synod to move west, and David became the full-time Lutheran preacher at St. John's, although not yet ordained as a pastor. During the latter part of 1814, either Holy Communion was not celebrated among the Lutheran congregation, Philip Henkel administered it before he relocated, or another senior Pastor supplied the congregation.¹²

In 1815, Catechist Henkel held services at least once per month, and the congregation of St. John's grew considerably. At the January and February services, he baptized one child each month. Following the regular March service, Henkel baptized three children on April 2, seven later that month, four more on May 21, five on July 23, and eleven during the months of August and September. Catechist Daniel Moser baptized Henkel's daughter, Susanna in March, indicating Moser's general presence in the area.¹³

The general schedule for Holy Communion was resumed at twice per year. If the Sacrament was celebrated in April, it is not recorded, but Henkel was present at St. John's on two consecutive days, April 1 and 2, and it is not known who performed the sacramental service. The first actual listing of the Lord's Supper being delivered with David Henkel in attendance is September 30/October 1 consecutive days, but his license as Catechist required a senior pastor. Since his brother Philip was in the general area, it is probable that he administered the sacrament.¹⁴ The two day observance of the sacrament allowed for a preparatory sermon to be delivered on Saturday, after which Henkel spent the night with a nearby member rather than ride the twenty-plus miles to his home near Lincolnton. On Sunday, worship services were conducted in the morning, with a break for the noon meal. In the afternoon, the actual communion service was held. Holding these services outdoors was not unusual, as the customary dates for communion were in the spring and fall, when the weather normally was moderate.

During the remainder of 1815, eight children were baptized in two services, and a private communion was given to a Mr. Noll on December 17. In total, the year 1815 represented stability, with at least fifteen pastoral visits, thirty-seven baptisms, and at least one celebration of the Lord's Supper.¹⁵

The North Carolina Synod meeting was held at Emmanuel's-Lincolnton in October 1815. At this meeting, David Henkel's status as "Candidate" for the ministry was instituted. This allowed Henkel to administer Holy Communion and confirmations of the youth.¹⁶

Regular monthly services were continued through January and February of 1816, when a total of seven infants and one adult were baptized. Candidate Henkel continued his service to St. John's, a congregation which was prospering in numbers, in no small measure, due to his convictions, zeal, and energy. **The date of March 3, 1816 provides testament to his inspiration. On that date, David Henkel baptized eight infants and six adults. If this were not satisfactory achievement, forty-two individuals were confirmed into the Church and the St. John's Evangelical Lutheran congregation.** What a remarkable achievement for the congregation, and its twenty year old pastor! Bear in mind, however, that a pastoral Candidate had not been regularly available since brother Philip departed in 1814. It is likely that a "Preparatory Sermon" was delivered on that date. **For on the next day, March 4, 1816, one hundred thirty-two persons partook of the Lord's Supper!** This also is a very large number for this era, and indicates that the size of the St. John's was quite large.¹⁷

For the remainder of this year, services were held in April, July, May, September, October, and December. Reformed Pastors Boger and Houck also were present on one known occasion each, and likely preached to the German Reformed congregation, or even more likely, to anyone understanding the language offered.¹⁸

On his way to the Guilford County October Synod meeting, Henkel enlisted St. John's member and delegate, Frederick Hoke to accompany him on the arduous trip. They arrived on Sunday, the 20th. After Synod, David and Philip returned to the Hoke residence on the Saturday prior to David's scheduled appointment at St. John's. Former Pastor Philip was in attendance and assisted his sibling in the communion services the following weekend. David would need assistance, as on that date, **150 persons communed at St. John's**, breaking the record set earlier

12. Bernheim, p. 399.

13. *David Henkel Diary*, 1815.

14. *Ibid.* Morgan, pp. 41-42.

15. *David Henkel Diary*, 1815.

16. Bernheim & Cox, p. 44. *N. C. Synod Minutes*, transl., 1815.

17. *David Henkel Diary*, 1816.

18. *Ibid.*

that year. Later this year, Henkel baptized a total of 35 infants and seven adults, for a yearly total of 84 new members. 1816 was another remarkable year for St. John's.¹⁹

The Synod regularly requested David Henkel to take missionary trips, whereupon he'd travel, preach, and teach in other areas of the country, including South Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky. This was the case during the summer months of 1816, and explains his absence from St. John's.²⁰ Other area Lutheran ministers were Daniel Moser and Robert J. Miller. Whether either provided supply services is not known.

Consistency was resumed in 1817, with services held every month except April and August. January marked at least three visits as on the eighth, he baptized eight infants and conducted a funeral service; on the fourteenth, another funeral; and on the 21st, he baptized one adult and one infant at "Mr. Hunsicker's" house, presumably of the Reformed congregation. In February, the monthly visit consisted of the baptism of three infants and a funeral service. On March 30, four infants were baptized, followed by an additional four infants at the May 4 services.²¹

As a part of the "Preparatory Service" of May 30, six infants were baptized, and twenty-three renewed their baptismal vows in the confirmation ceremonies. On the following day, Holy Communion was celebrated, with about one hundred participants -- another large number, but less than that from the previous year. Two Elders, Peter Hoke and Peter Little, were consecrated during this service.²²

During July, a total of six infants were baptized in two separate services. August represented a leave of absence similar to the previous year. Upon his return, Henkel baptized six infants at the September 7 service, and three more on October 5th. On October 16, in the presence of Philip Henkel and Joseph E. Bell, three baptisms were conducted the week before the Synod meeting. The Eucharist was again observed on November 1 and 2 services. The year was ended by a service on December 28, when three were baptized, bringing the yearly total to 43 infant baptisms, about 4 adult baptisms, 23 confirmations, and over 100 communicants.²³ This totals 70 new members in 1817, which is the third straight year of tremendous growth.

The Synod meeting of 1817 recognized a change in trends in marriage ceremonies, and the North Carolina Synod offered its advice in form of a resolution:

When any of our church members desire to be married on the Sabbath, it was resolved that it be done publicly in the church; and if others wish to be married on that day, by our ministers, they are to decide where and when, yet in such a manner, that the Sabbath and the transaction be religiously enforced and explained.²⁴

Henkel soon had occasion to follow this resolution, as he performed his first recorded St. John's marriage ceremony on January 29, 1818, when Daniel Hoke and Sarah Smith were united. Payment of \$3.00 was received for pastoral services, an amount much larger than the standard \$1.00 gratuity of the late eighteenth century. Now-Candidate Daniel Moser baptized Henkel's daughter, Elizabeth Ann, at School House Church, on January 25. An infant was baptized at the February 1 service and a funeral was conducted on the 28th for Mr. Sammet.²⁵

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*, 1817.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*

24. Gottlieb Shober, *Comprehensive Account of the Rise and Progress of the Reformation of the Christian Church by Dr. Martin Luther, actually begun on the 31st day of October, A. D. 1517; interspersed with views of his character and doctrine, extracted from his books; and how the Church, established by him, arrived and progressed in North Carolino--os also the Constitution and Rules of that Church, in North Carolina and adjoining States, as existing in October, 1817*, (Baltimore: 1818), p. 171. Hereinafter referenced "Luther", as this is the name that appears on the back cover. This book was located at Perkins Library of Duke University. Inside the front cover was written, "Bought of the Rev. David Henkel this 24th March 1837 [sic, as Henkel died in 1831, most likely the date should be 1827]. Paid 25 cents. Jacob Stirewalt's Book." It was donated to the Duke Library by M. Luther Stirewalt.

25. *Ibid.*, 1818. This was the first St. John's wedding with a verifiable record, that can be located, but there were surely many others that were not recorded. *Helmsdaed Reports*, p. 243. Moser confirms the baptism of Henkel's daughter in Daniel Moser to Solomon Henkel, 30 Jan 1818, Alderman Library, UVA. 8653-f, box 1. The baptism date was given as the Sunday before the date of the letter.

Frantz Sammet (also seen as Fritz or Francis Summit on early documents) was a German pioneer to the area, and his tombstone is one of the latest legible stones in the German language, with the following inscription:

Hir ligt begraben
Frantz Sammet er Ist
gebohren im Jahr 1741
im hornung und ist
gestorben um 27 hornung

Translated:

Here lies buried
Frantz Sammet he is
born in year of 1741
in February and is
dead about 27 February
year of 1818 26

The language transition in the area began by the time of the Revolutionary War, when the German-speaking population was compelled to verbally communicate with the English element. Gradually, this resulted in those who learned to speak both languages. A few even could write in both German and English script, and some of them became important liaisons between the two cultures. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, bilingualism was commonplace, and the younger generation was rapidly moving towards English. One begins to see many signatures of German-speaking descendants in English. At the founding meeting of the North Carolina Synod in 1803, one pastor (R. J. Miller) and four delegates were entirely English-speaking in an otherwise German conference. The transactions were conducted in both languages.

By that decade, English handwriting was beginning to emerge at St. John's, with church leaders Jacob Fullbright, John Smith, Peter Little, Frederick Hoke, Daniel Woodring, and others adapting to the English script.

By this time, "the trend in all sections was decidedly in the direction of English." Being American-born and multi-lingual, David Henkel, his brother Philip, as well as their father Paul, could deliver sermons fluently in either language, German or English. Paul strongly preferred German, and nearly always wrote in that language. Philip preferred German also, although he was remarkable in his abilities in writing in either language. At St. John's, David Henkel alternated between languages, in order to reach the pioneers holding the German language, and their children and grand-children, who were learning English. Early in his career, he began to prefer English, as he stated: "I can express my real & warm sentiments better, and also convey my ideas in a nobler manner, . . . yet I am endeavoring to retain my mother tongue as long as I live."²⁷ His mastery of English is exhibited by the correctness of his grammar, the excellent spelling, and the breadth of vocabulary, seen in even his earliest writings.

Henkel was once described by an antagonist as desiring of the support of the English-speaking Lutherans. There is a stark contrast between David Henkel and Daniel Moser in their preference of language in the Church. In 1814, David ordered 500-600 English catechisms and 200 English pamphlets of a doctrinal nature. By the year 1819, he ordered 75 copies of the Synod Minutes in English, and none in German; yet Moser ordered his allotment in German only, although he, too, could speak and write fluently in either language. Moser defended the use of German, as he felt this would allow the older family members to properly teach the children in the Catechism, and other religious matters. Meanwhile, David, upon acceptance of the English Hymnal by the Synod in 1817, encouraged his brothers at the Henkel Press to discontinue printing German hymnals altogether, as he believed the English version was more valuable at that time.²⁸

The German accent spoken by these pastors was likely very similar to that of their listeners. Their Lutheran predecessor, Arends, nearly always wrote in his native tongue, and apparently spoke English only with a difficult

26. Mark Smith, "Tombstone Update," *Catawba Cousins*, Vol. 10, No. 3, (Dec 1995), p. 29.

27. David to Solomon, 15 Jan 1814, cited previously.

28. Gehrke, pp. 6, 11, 15. *Shober's Review*, p. 32. Only Gottlieb Schober appears to be nearly equal to Henkel in English, but Philip and Daniel Moser were also very good. Daniel Moser to Solomon Henkel, cited above. David to Solomon, 15 Jan 1814, cited above. David to Solomon, 29 Oct. 1817, UVA, 8653-c, Box 1, 1816-1819.

accent, based on the Paul Henkel description of the 1803 Synod meeting.²⁹ Portions of the community were obviously well acquainted with both languages, and the contrast between Moser and Henkel suggests that quite a debate was on-going within the church and community -- one which had not yet reached its maturity.

An English-speaking pastor described the state of the language transition of the period, "While all understood familiar and colloquial English and could express themselves therein, they did so, 'with a peculiar German accent, pronunciation and phrase.'"³⁰ Many were still *koink to breedchink on Sonntag*. All known correspondence from St. John's to the North Carolina Synod after 1816 was in English, although the Synod itself provided both languages for several more years. Remnants of German script remained within the membership at this time, but signatures on legal documents were converting quickly to English. One of the major congregational problems with the language transition was the dearth of translated German religious literature in English. When and if English publications were available, were they doctrinally sound? Some did not think so.³¹

Three infants were baptized at St. John's on March 1, 1818, for which Henkel received \$4.75. On April 4th and 5th, eight infants were baptized, and the Eucharist was celebrated; and from May 3 through October 18, an additional nineteen were baptized. On October 24th and 25th, three were confirmed into church membership and the Lord's Supper was held. In November, Henkel made one of his yearly sojourns, and upon his return on December 6, five infants were baptized. Henkel's statistics for 1818 list 32 baptisms, infants and otherwise, two communion services, three confirmations, one marriage, one funeral, and one serious controversy with a few Synod leaders -- which story will appear later.³² Two speculations are offered for the decline in confirmands. First, Henkel took his regular missionary trip to other states and his figures may not represent the labors of other German Pastors who may have supplied the congregation. Secondly, and possibly more significant, another Lutheran congregation was in its formative state near the Oxford Ford. It was later named St. Peter's, was also a "union" church for Lutheran, Reformed, and Episcopal, and was likely served by Candidate Daniel Moser who lived in the community, and Robert J. Miller who now lived in Burke County.

The year 1819 was fairly routine within the Lutheran congregation. Henry Yount was married on March 7, and John Miller, on October 3. Thirty infants or children, and a single adult, were baptized this year. On November 6 former Pastor Paul Henkel was present for the regular service.³³

David reported his congregations' status to the Secretary of the Synod in this year. Since this is the first "parochial report" from a St. John's pastor that could be located, it is repeated:

Mr. Secretary,

The following is a statement of the number of members belonging to my congregations. I will estimate them some less than what the number may really be. It is impossible to define the number exactly: I make the calculation from the number of communicants at sundry times: & a few over, as they do not always all commune.

	members
St. John's	200
St. Paul's	70
Lebanon	40

29. Fincke's, *Paul Henkel Journal*, p. 46.

30. Rev. Martin F. Kuegele, "The First Lutherans in the State of Missouri," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, Vol. XXV, No. 3, October 1952, (St. Louis: 1952), pp. 128-129. Although this was written by a Presbyterian Pastor Flint about the early settlers in southeastern Missouri, it is evident that this group primarily consisted of former Catawba/Gaston/Lincoln County residents, and the language transition was surely similar to this area. Included in this article were the names of Bollinger, Costner, John Deck, George and Peter Grount, John and Isaac Miller, John Lowrance, Daniel Hohn (Hahn), Peter Baker, Jacob Hinkle, Johannes Schmidt, etc.. The first Lutheran pastor in Missouri is listed as Christian Moretz, who was ordained by the Tennessee Synod as Deacon in 1822 and Pastor in 1823. Moretz is another North Carolina name. The article's author was a former pastor at St. Peter's Lutheran, Catawba County, North Carolina, when he wrote the article, and it is apparent that he recognized the family connections.

31. See Mark Smith, "The Language Transition From German To English In Old Lincoln County", in Anne Williams McAllister, *Through Four Generations Heinrich Weidner 1717-1792 Catharina Moll 1733-1804*, Vol. II, pp. 522-534 for a thorough discussion of the language transition.

32. *David Henkel Diary*, 1818.

33. *Ibid*.

School house church	40
White Haven	90
Philadelphia	150
Longcreek	20
Morningstar & Duck creek	60
Scattered members, who are not regularly formed into congregations though administered unto	<u>60</u>
	total 760
	34

Although this document states the statistical importance of St. John's, it does not include the area Churches served by Moser and Miller. These unlisted Churches include Zion and Grace of current Catawba County; Salem, Emmanuel's, and possibly Hebron, of Lincoln County; Beaver Dam of Gaston County; and possibly others.

THE GATHERING CLOUDS

The past several years' history has been portrayed with brief mention of the North Carolina Synod's activities. This order was chosen to demonstrate the continued growth of the St. John's congregation under David Henkel's guidance. At this point, the chronological order is broken, and the subject moves to the larger body of Lutherans, as their actions affected Henkel, St. John's, other area Churches, the German community, and eventually, Lutheranism in this entire country.

Eminent Lutheran historians have spent many hours in an examination of the records of this period, and have printed many words in an attempt to explain and justify the motives and actions of the conflicting entities from 1814 through 1830. The earliest comprehensive Lutheran historian in North Carolina refused to share the details surrounding this era, and stated, "Let us by all means have a hopeful future, and let us throw no obstacles in the way of 'the dead past burying its dead.'"³⁵ His successors in print have not heeded this advice, and have displayed varying opinions based on an assortment of source information. Some have concluded that the end result was primarily caused by a personality conflict, others insist that it was disagreement in doctrine, a third group espouses that it was the ordination practice of the North Carolina Synod, and others prefer to state a variety of these conflicts in combination. However, overlooked by all was a geographical separatism occurring, with the Catawba River generally defining the boundary between the Synod leaders and a significant population of Lutherans. Language also became an issue. Whether the Synod recognized this trend, or could have corrected it under the circumstances, remains a "what if" that may never be answered with certainty.

An ignored quote by Rev. Robert Johnson Miller foretells these "gathering clouds":

As to the cloud in the north east quarter of our little Synodical horizon, I have long seen it gathering, and therefore, am not much surprised to hear that it begins to lower, but however protentious [sic] it may appear, I hope it will be dispeled [sic] without producing a general much less an universal deluge. . . .³⁶

For Miller these "gathering clouds" emanated from the "old Lutheran", Paul Henkel, whom he also called "the would be Pope". Miller suggested to Schober that upright Methodists and religious Calvinists may also enjoy salvation. He even suggested that the time may be right for a new reformation like Luther's, but this reformation would rid the world of infidelity and formalism. Apparently Paul Henkel had criticized unionistic practices within the North Carolina Synod. Clearly as early as 1816 confessional Lutheran issues were challenging the status quo of Miller and Schober to the point that Miller suggested that "if there ever is a Separation [sic] it will by the H[enkel]'s and for the reason you [Schober] have assigned."³⁷

34. Letter from David Henkel to Secretary Gottlieb Schober, dated May 6, 1819, Gottlieb Schober Papers, Old Salem Library, Winston-Salem, N. C..

35. Bornheim, p. viii. A few of the disputants were still alive at time of this writing, and synodical rivalry had calmed down somewhat.

36. R. J. Miller to Schober, 17 July 1816, NGNCS, 1.0.1. Folder #2.

37. *Ibid.*

While it is far beyond the intent of this history to engage in the doctrinal debates of ages prior to those involving St. John's, a layman's overview is necessary to provide a historical setting.

The early German-speaking pastors (and parishioners) in North America were often influenced by a trend that is commonly labeled "Pietism," which was a reaction to the immoral personal behavior that developed in Europe in the latter part of the seventeenth century. Carrying this to its pinnacle, if a person's action resulted in human pleasure, and was not done with the intent of promoting God's purpose or for the betterment of oneself or his fellow man, it was considered a sin, as one's time should be better spent. If it was leisurely or fun, it must be a sin, and could not be to the glory of God. Eventually, this resulted in evaluation of a person's Christianity based on his pious living and self-righteousness -- rather than solely on his faith. German theologians, Spener and Francke, were opposed to dance, theater, and card-playing; their more enthusiastic followers were against laughing, taking a leisurely walk, and use of tobacco.³⁸ Pietism will be discussed more fully, as the doctrinal issues arise.

The doctrinal pendulum swung in a different direction, when theologians asserted that moderate engagement in pleasurable pursuits were not sinful -- as these were not expressly forbidden in the Bible. The gradual result was termed "Rationalism." In strict "rationalism," interpretations of the Scriptures were made by application of human logic or a "rational" analysis. Such concepts as "miracles," "virgin birth," and "faith" were discredited, as they were foreign to human reason.³⁹

Neither of these trends were espoused by the historical Confessions, although Lutherans and other Protestants in Europe had promoted both. As these differences were being reconciled by the clergy, a wide range of Protestant practices became accepted, with doctrine and confessional basis being further subordinated. "Unionism" followed, where different denominations constructed churches for joint worship, maintained joint congregations, used identical hymn books, and knelt at the altar together. As this phenomenon grew, the larger church organizations were following this trend.

When the constitution of the Pennsylvania Synod was revised in 1792, all references to the Lutheran confessions were stricken. The New York Synod followed and after 1807, denied the inspiration and authority of the Bible, the validity of the Apostles' Creed, and the principal Lutheran confessions. Rationalism was rampant in the northeastern states and particularly New York, whereby faith in the Word of God began to be tempered by human reasoning and interpretation.⁴⁰

On the North Carolina scene, in 1794, Robert J. Miller was ordained by the Lutheran pastors as a Methodist-Episcopal pastor, was accepted into their fellowship, and became a regular officer in the early North Carolina Synod a few years later.⁴¹

When the North Carolina Synod was formed in 1803, there was not a single word about the Holy Scriptures or any signal of a confessional statement published. The word "Lutheran" cannot be found in the minutes of this meeting, possibly as a concession to Pastor Miller, or innocent failure to recognize the necessity of a public declaration. In 1804, the Synod ordered the Augsburg Confession to be published, but never formally adopted it as its basis of union.⁴²

Rationalism and Unionism, coupled with the new trend called Fanaticism, Revivalism, or "new measures" of the late 1700's and early 1800's, promoted the co-mingling of the denominations, particularly among those speaking English. Were it not for the location of many of these early revivals in the Catawba Valley, this trend might pass relatively unnoticed in this history. Credit for the first known revival in the area belongs to the Presbyterians and Methodists. Pastor James Hall, of Iredell County, held a revival "soon after the close of the Revolution when he found that the soldiers were reluctant to put aside the ways of the tented field."⁴³ The movement reached the area west of the Catawba circa 1790, when the Methodist Church dispatched Pastors John McGee and Daniel Asbury to establish the Lincoln circuit of that faith. McGee became an itinerant minister to this

38. Prof. Theodore Graebner, D. D., *The Borderland of Right and Wrong*, (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis: 1938), pp. vii-xii.

"Orthodoxy-Pietism," *OCP*, XX:40, 5 October 1892 (author's name unknown).

39. Graebner, cited above.

40. Wentz, 1955, pp. 73-74.

41. Bernheim, p. 337-340. Bernheim & Cox, pp. 18-19, 24-25. Morgan, pp. 25-26.

42. Bernheim, p. 358-359. Bernheim & Cox, pp. 28-29, cited from *NC Synod Minutes, 1804*, p. 13. Morgan, pp. 39.

43. Guion Griffith Jenkins, "Revival Movements in Ante-Bellum North Carolina," *The North Carolina Historical Review*, XI, (N. C. Historical Commission, Raleigh: January 1933), p. 27, cited from William Henry Foot, *Sketches of North Carolina*, (NY: 1846), p. 327.

and other states, and he became very well known for his revivals held elsewhere. Soon after arrival, the first camp meeting was held, and Asbury eventually founded the first Methodist Church along the Catawba River on the Grassy Branch of Mountain Creek in Lincoln County, which became known as Rehobeth. In 1794, another camp meeting was conducted by Methodists Asbury, William McKendree (became Bishop in 1808), William Fullwood, Nicholas Walters, Presbyterian James Hall, and possibly Methodist John McGee. Its results were the conversion of three hundred souls, and future yearly meetings were held at other sites west of the Catawba. Asbury stated, "Again I pray God that there may be twenty camp-meetings a week"! He repeated, "More camp meetings! I hear and see the great effects produced by them." Eventually, this original camp meeting became Rock Springs Camp Ground. No record has been found that Arends or Loretz attended or participated in these earliest meetings, although several of these events were held not far from Arends' home.⁴⁴

By the turn of the century, this experience had become more and more commonplace. These revivals and camp meetings promoted great excitement, prompting one observer to believe that "the loudest shouter was often looked upon as the most devout person at a camp meeting." As emotionalism reached its peak, certain Lutheran pastors had significant reservations concerning the appropriateness of this method of worship in the conversion of souls, and preferred the traditional German instruction process. Others seemed to condone revivals as proper, or at least, were very undecided on the issue. None could deny the popularity of these events, as some of these meetings were attended by large gatherings. In particular, by years 1801 and 1802 revivals reached their peak locally, when a meeting in Iredell County reported 109 wagons, 4000 souls, and the ministers included eight Presbyterians, one Baptist, and two Methodists. Paul Henkel, Carl Storch, and R. J. Miller attended one or more of these events and reported many strange (to them) occurrences, plus an altercation or two with the English-speaking pastors, who were instilling high levels of excitement into the conversion process.⁴⁵

It was a matter of time before the German-speaking neighbors in these same settlements began to recognize the "new measures" and were requesting their clergy to hold similar meetings. By 1810, the area was greatly influenced by this method of reaching out to the unchurched, and upon motion of Philip Henkel, the North Carolina Lutheran Synod resolved that three-day meetings should be held in Lutheran churches by three Lutheran ministers, plus members of the Moravian or Reformed faith, if they desired. Holy Communion was to be administered afterwards. Several of these meetings were conducted in the next few years, with both Lutheran and Reformed pastors in attendance.⁴⁶

As can be seen by the "camp meeting" movement and the resolution above which included a joint communion, the trends of the various Protestant faiths were towards which was formerly a strictly English phenomenon had begun to cross the lines of language. While cooperation between the denominations sounds admirable and beneficial to the Christian church, its achievement required doctrinal compromise and spawned further movement away from the creed. In North Carolina and at St. John's, the most obvious manifestation was the "union" church tradition brought down from Pennsylvania, where Lutherans, German Reformeds, and often others, worshipped and communed together. Reformed children were baptized by Lutheran pastors, and vice versa. In some communities, various other Protestant denominations (English and German) were also included, as can be seen from land deeds, contracts, constitutions, and other extant documents.

44. Elmer Talmage Clark, *Methodism in Western North Carolina. Western North Carolina Conference Methodist Church*, (Parthenon Press, Nashville: 1966), pp. 31, 51, with citations from W. L. Grissom, *Methodism in North Carolina from 1772 to the Present Time*, Vol. 1, (Publication House of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, Nashville and Dallas: 1905), p. 330. M. H. Moore, *Sketches of the Pioneers of Methodism in North Carolina and Virginia*, (Southern Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, TN: 1884), repr. (The Attie Press, Greenwood, SC: 1977), p. 242. E. L. Blair, "Rock Springs. The First Camp Meeting in the United States. Important Changes Next Year," *The Newton Enterprise*, 14 September 1911.

45. Homer M. Keever, *Iredell, Piedmont County*, (Statesville Record and Landmark, Brady Printing Co., Statesville: 1976), RCC: Mark did not specify the page number. Bost and Norris, pp. 36-41. Guion, p. 41.

46. *Bulletin of the Genealogical Society of Old Tryon County, Inc.*, Vol. V, No. 1 (Spindale, NC: Feb. 1977), p. 7. Bost and Norris, *All One Body*, provides excellent descriptions of these forces on the Lutheran community, and the historical context in which they occurred. Bernheim, p. 376, cited from NC Synod Minutes. Philip to Solomon, ??? May 1811, UVA, 8653-4, Box 2, 1811-1813, lists three day meetings in Wilkes County, and in one of Storch's congregations. Pastors included Lutherans Philip Henkel, R. J. Miller, C. A. Storch, and Godfrey Dreher; and Reformed student Wilhelm Hauck.

The unionism trend in North Carolina was further advanced in 1810, when the Synod ordained the fifty-four-year-old Moravian, Gottlieb Schober, as pastor. This was not so unusual during this era, as the Lutherans and Moravians often were very cooperative, spoke the same language, and were not distant in doctrine. Paul Henkel had preached in the Moravian Churches on occasion, and had also invited the Moravian Pastors into his, as he believed they preached with "exemplary order and propriety" and were friendly "in their deportment of all other orderly pastors." The Moravians, or the Unity of Brethren, also accepted both Lutheran and Reformed into their congregations, "without separating from their religion on that account." During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Moravian pastors often supplied Lutheran and Reformed pulpits in and around Wachovia and to the east, although none is regularly known to have ventured west of the Catawba. Schober was never strictly a Lutheran, and he brought into the North Carolina Synod his Moravian philosophies embracing the other denominations. He was highly respected in Salem, was engaged in several commercial and political enterprises, was an accomplished musician, and immediately became a very influential leader of the Synod.⁴⁷

Schober's Moravian brothers were initially unsettled regarding this ordination, and Schober displayed considerable courage by forming an alliance with the Lutherans. The following are brief excerpts from the Moravian records during this decade that clearly explain Schober's personal situation:

Oct. 21, 1810: "Br. Gottlieb Schober was ordained a Lutheran minister. We believe that by this step he has left our church, but for the sake of his family, he will be permitted to continue to live in Salem."

1819: "From Salem it is noted that Pastor Schober has again been recognized as a member of the place-congregation, without interfering with his work in the Lutheran Church'. Announced to the congr. 12th May 1819."⁴⁸

During this period, Schober seemed to maintain a good relationship with the Moravian clergy, if not the entire rank and file of the Brethren, as he "regularly visited the Moravian churches in Salem." When his Lutheran congregations reached five in number, Schober could not serve them once per month. As there was a shortage of Lutheran Pastors, he turned to the Moravians, with the consent of the Elders of the Lutheran congregations, and "Br. Gotthold Reichel preached several times at the Lutheran churches a few miles north of Salem."⁴⁹

Although the Synod resisted the ordination of William Hauck as a German Reformed minister in 1812, Schober's Moravian influence continued at the next annual Synod meeting. Upon several requests for pastoral services, there was a critical shortage of Lutheran pastors, and the Synod looked toward the Brethren in Wachovia. President Storch and Gottlieb Schober sent a letter to the Moravian clergy, requesting assistance in serving several of the new congregations, and in giving religious instruction to Lutheran youth in accordance with Luther's catechism. As the Moravians also recognized the Augsburg Confession, and believed that the catechism was a useful means of teaching the youth, they considered the matter seriously. The letter to Salem also included the following language:

Each time it will be our endeavor, affectionately, to receive our preachers or any experienced Christians who may visit our congregations, so that the important unity of the Spirit may be attained.⁵⁰

The Moravian response was partially favorable, as they were pleased with the respect shown by the Lutheran clergy, and reciprocated the "unity of the Spirit." However, due to their own shortage of Pastors and competent lay-teachers, the Moravians felt unable to provide immediate assistance.

. . . that your friendly invitation to our ministers or other suitable persons to visit in your congregations may be accepted as opportunity offers . . .⁵¹

47. Fries, Vol. III: pp. 992-993, 1065, 1079, 1114, 1115, 1152; Vol. VII, pp. 3066, 3082, 3085, 3229. Dr. Jerry L. Surratt, *Gottlieb Schober of Salem, Discipleship and Ecumenical Vision in an Early Moravian Town*, (Mercer University Press, Macon, Georgia: 1983), gives descriptions of Schober throughout his book. Bernheim, p. 371, from Paul Henkel's 1806 report to the VA Synod.

48. Fries, Vol. VII, pp. 3123, 3401. Notice on the second quote that Schober was referenced as "Pastor" and not the normal title, "Brother," indicating that there may have still been a little prejudice exhibited.

49. Surratt, pp. 138, 152. The source of this information is from six citations from the Moravian Records.

50. Fries, Vol. VII, p. 3209, 3542-3543. Bernheim, p. 395, cited from *NC Synod Minutes, 1812*. "Unity of the spirit" sounds peculiarly Moravian.

If there were Moravian misgivings or hostilities respecting Schober's Lutheran ordination, this surely helped to soothe them.

There was increasing interest by the Synod leaders in cooperating with other Lutheran Synods in the North Atlantic states. Initial communications were received as early as 1807, but little movement began until 1814, when Schober approached the Pennsylvania Synod. In a follow-up letter, he stated:

I have written to the President of your Synod, Dr. Muhlenberg, and especially requested him to lay before your synod the question of the advisability of editing or compiling a complete Agenda for the whole of North America. . . . Since by this means, in the future, unity in the Symbols of the Church can be preserved and innovations guarded against.⁵²

This manifested itself more clearly in later years, but the seeds were being planted, and were germinating.

St. John's Lutheran pastors Arends, Paul Henkel, Philip Henkel, and David Henkel are all known to have held multiple services with pastors of other faiths -- primarily the German Reformeds -- so unity with those of similar language and culture was commonplace locally. Also, the presence of Episcopalian/Lutheran R. J. Miller continued to be felt west of the Catawba.⁵³

The 1814 Constitution of neighboring Zion Church further indicates this general trend between Lutheran and Reformed:

Only such children shall be entered on the church register, as were baptized by a preacher or candidate of our connection, or such as were baptized by a regular English or German Reformed preacher.

The Reformed shall be bound by the above constitution no longer than until they have received a regular teacher [pastor], or have received for themselves a constitution from their conference.⁵⁴

In the same year, the "union" church of Salem, Lincoln County, voted to repair its old structure "so as to render it commodious for the purpose of a place of divine worship -- to be free to all Christian (denominations, or) worshipers for any and every Christian Minister of any denomination whatever . . ."⁵⁵

At St. John's, the general trend of inter-denominationalism or unionism was little different than its neighbors.

The combination of Pietism and unionism is demonstrated in Gottlieb Schober's translation in 1815 of *Spirits Scenes*, a book by Heinrich Jung-Stilling, radical German Pietist. While Schober may not have believed all of the ideas of Jung-Stilling, he adhered to most of his beliefs. Some excerpts from the book show how Schober, Stork, and Miller were continuing to stray from confessional Lutheranism, if they had ever truly embraced it:

I will neither be called Calvinist, Moravian, nor Separated [sic] Christian, or Puritan, all this savors of sectarian spirit; I confess myself simply and only to the doctrine of Jesus and his apostles, and with that I wear as a distinction of the politically established christian societies, . . . the more we bring our depravity to light, the sooner are we delivered therefrom by the blood of Christ. . . . Lord! Let me during this day not miss one opportunity to do good. . . . Champions [of Christianity] are exceedingly scarce Now the great missionary society in England, . . . others in Germany (and everywhere) are connecting themselves, have paved the way towards a universal union.⁵⁶

51. Fries, Vol. VII, pp. 3543-3544.

52. Rev. Prof. H. E. Jacobs, *The Problem of the Lutheran Church in the South*, from address delivered at the Third Annual Lutheran Reunion held at Hickory, N. C., August 7, 1902, (Hickory, NC: 1902), p. 4. "Agenda" probably refers to "liturgy."

53. Arends is reported to have traveled with Andrew Loretz. Paul Henkel traveled with many pastors to camp meetings. Philip Henkel was friendly towards Pastor James Hall, and David Henkel's connection appears occasionally in his Diary, as noted in the text.

54. *Constitution of Zion Church*, May 29th, 1814, as introduced by Candidate Daniel Moser, typed transcription from Lutheran Archives in Salisbury. Although this was a Moser congregation, it is likely that the Henkel churches enacted similar rules. Copy of this transcription from Anne W. McAllister files.

55. *Salem Church Congregational Minutes Excerpts*, typed transcr., author unknown, McCubbins Files, Rowan County Library.

56. The German name of his publication was *Szenen aus dem Geisterreiche*. Jung-Stilling was a physician, eye surgeon, economist, as well as philosopher and theologian. He was anti-rationalistic and was called a "Neo-Pietist", see Stoefler, p. 257-265. A copy of *Spirits Scenes* can be seen at MESA, pp. vii, 24, 60, 205-206.

Other beliefs of Jung-Stilling included an afterlife where one's soul was "floating above the body" and "magnetically attracted" to it. He believed that the pious poor would be more likely eternally rewarded than the rich. He expected Christians to march through various "degreys" on their way to becoming "an Angel". He also criticized universities, science, ministers, and earthly pleasures.⁵⁷

Schober was so supportive of Jung-Stilling's ideas that he translated his second volume of *Spirits Scenes*. While this volume was never published, at least one excerpt summarizes his philosophical impact on Schober:

...but the proper and grand union into one flock, will only then be effected when the tempest from the West, blows them all together into one fold. . . . the variety of opinion in nonessentials, and which are made to be principals, continues to divide the minds of the best man, although the foundation of faith is with them all alike. . . . my inward calling to operate towards a union of spirit, to effect internal not external union of the religious parties of all Christians.⁵⁸

With this philosophical basis at the 1816 Synod meeting, Synod Secretary Schober was selected to "compile all the rules adopted by this Synod, and publish them into the English language."⁵⁹ Previous minutes had been published in English, German, or in both languages. Philip Henkel offered this suggestion, and with the language conversion taking place among the German-speaking population, it was an astute observation of the membership's trends. It also facilitated the promotion of Lutheranism into the English-speaking settlements to the west.

Schober's treatise was entitled *Comprehensive Account of the Rise and Progress of the blessed Reformation of the Christian Church by Dr. Martin Luther, actually begun on the 31st day of October, A. D. 1517; interspersed with views of his character and doctrine, extracted from his books; and how the Church, established by him, arrived and progressed in North Carolina,—as also, the Constitution and Rules of that Church, in North Carolina and adjoining States, as existing in October, 1817*. In the interest of brevity, this title was commonly referred to as simply *Luther*, the name printed on the back cover of the book. As the year 1817 marked the 300th anniversary of the Reformation, Schober seized the opportunity to commemorate it, and included a brief history of the Lutheran Church from its roots in Germany to its branch in North Carolina. An English translation of the Augsburg Confession was also to be appended. Its manuscript was presented to a Synod review committee of Philip Henkel, Joseph E. Bell, and Robert J. Miller, who did "highly approve of its contents," and recommended its publication.⁶⁰

Although *Luther* received unanimous, initial, acceptance by the pastors of the Synod, including David Henkel, this work demonstrated further Synodical trends towards unionism.⁶¹ It is particularly obvious in the introduction and the conclusion, which are primarily Schober's own viewpoints, but still endorsed heartily:

... and to raise the spirit of love and union, among all the believers in the divinity of Jesus Christ, the only mediator between God and man; so that we may arrive to that happy period foretold, of living blissfully as one flock, under one Shepherd.

But thank God, we see the morning star rising; union is approaching in Europe by Bible Societies, in America likewise, in which are united all persuasions for propagating the everlasting gospel. . . .

I have attentively examined the doctrine of the Episcopal Church and read many excellent authors of the Presbyterians, know the Methodist doctrine from their book Portraiture of Methodism, and am acquainted with the Baptist doctrine so far as they admit and adore Jesus the Savior. Among all those classes who worship Jesus as God I see nothing of importance to prevent a cordial union; and how happy it would be if all the churches could unite and send deputies to a general meeting of all denominations and there sink down upon the rock, Jesus, at the same time leaving to each their particular mode and form. . . .

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. ix, 64, 244, 65, 84, 122-123, 15, 130.

⁵⁸ The second volume of *Spirits Scenes* is in manuscript form at MESDA, Vol. II, Scenes VII, VIII.

⁵⁹ Henkel, p. 11. Bernheim, p. 432. Bernheim & Cox, pp. 50-51. Morgan, p. 39. The specific language of the quote changes slightly from source to source, possibly due to translation.

⁶⁰ Henkel, p. 11. *Luther*, pp. ix-x. At this time, Miller was still an Episcopal, Bell later joined the Presbyterian Church, and Philip Henkel was very conciliatory towards other denominations, so the committee was "Unionistic" in its make-up. Also, Bell and Miller were among the few English pastors in Synod at this time, and their appointment to this committee seems natural. Approval of *Luther* by the committee and Synod has been used as evidence that the Henkels were in complete accord with its contents, by way of the votes they cast. In fairness to both sides, complete and thorough scrutiny of this lengthy manuscript at the synodical conference seems unlikely by either committee or delegates — as it required the combined scholarly abilities of translation of, and comparison to, the original Augsburg Confession.

⁶¹ A letter from Schober to David Henkel, dated Oct. 20, 1818, (cited later) contains the language, "I am glad you approve of my *Luther* . . ."

I think my sentiments are as orthodox and Calvinistical as need be, and yet I am a sort of speckled bird among my Calvinist brethren. I am a mighty good churchman, but pass among such as a Dissenter in prunello. On the other hand, the Dissenters, many of them I mean, think me defective, either in understanding or in conscience, for staying where I am. Well, there is a middle party, called the Methodists, but neither do my dimensions exactly fit them; I am somehow disqualified for claiming a full brotherhood with any party; but there are a few among all parties who bear with me and love me, and with this I must be content.⁶²

Another writing of Schober includes similar language:

But surely it would be a millennium, and a desirable one, if the sheep of one flock, guided by and belonging to one shepherd, could, while feeding on his pastures, love one another with all their diversified colors.⁶³

A later historian wrote, that *Luther* "conforms in some respects to sound Lutheran principles, its general tone and tenor are compromising and unionistic, with a tendency to latitudinarianism and looseness in doctrine, rather ignoring the true Confessions of the Church, and disparaging her distinctive features, with a view to effect a kind of general, fraternal union with the different denominations."⁶⁴

The alternatives were straightforward. Should the North Carolina Lutheran Church retain its connections to the historical writings of its founders? Or should it discard the distinctions that the fore-fathers shed so much blood to defend, and gradually homogenize into a generic Protestantism, as was becoming prevalent elsewhere? The answers to such rhetorical questions are always difficult.

The unionistic and not-necessarily-Lutheran trend of the North Carolina Synod was now exposed in writing to the entire Protestant world. This attitude conformed with that of the two older synods of Pennsylvania and New York, as the following critical account describes:

Two German Lutheran synods had struck the Lutheran colors from their masts and dragged their anchors in shallow waters, and as the waters grew still shallower, threw overboard nearly all remnants of their Lutheran heritage, which they considered cumbersome ballast only, while a worthless cargo of baled second-hand rationalism, taken aboard from crafts sailing with the same ill eastern winds, was kept in view to conceal the poverty of a degenerated Church. . . . They had lost or thrown to the winds the purity of doctrine, and most of what had been distinctively Lutheran.⁶⁵

DOCTRINAL CONFLICTS

David Henkel had become the local "fly in the ointment." In early 1814, the eighteen-year-old had begun to delve deeply into some of the most confounding (and controversial) mysteries of Protestant doctrine. He rejected the Calvinistic teachings that a select number of mankind were predestined from the beginning of time to salvation or damnation. Rather, Henkel believed this concept was in opposition to 2 Corinthians 5:14, ". . . one died for all . . ." -- not just the select few.⁶⁶ Gradually, he refined his beliefs, and began to deliver them from area pulpits with conviction.

One of David's sermons, entitled *The Essence of the Christian Religion*, was delivered by the twenty-one year old in 1816, and published the following year. It was based on the text of John 4:8, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is Love."⁶⁷

The text alone railed against the remnants of Pietism, which were still present in the theology of the day, among some of the Pastors in the North Carolina Synod, and certainly, among some of neighboring

62. *Luther*, pp. viii, 209-211. Henkel, pp. 12-13.

63. *Schober's Review*, p. 6.

64. Henkel, p. 12.

65. Graebner, p. 328. This quotation was delivered many years later, after the confessional movement had matured, and is biased towards the position of the Church at that time.

66. David to Solomon, 15 Jan 1814, cited above.

67. David Henkel, *Essence of the Christian Religion: A Sermon by David Henkel*, (1817), no page numbers, hereinafter referenced *Essence*. Copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. A second copy was seen at UVA's Alderman Library.

denominations. Pietists taught that the human being was a hopeless sinner, and doomed for God's wrath. He must recognize his wretchedness, be truly humble, penitent, and suffer the pain, as did Christ on the cross. Then, and then only, through Christ's suffering and death, might he receive the mercy of a forgiving God, and be converted into a child of God through the Holy Spirit. It was often expected to be an emotionally-experienced reaction, as was promulgated during the "great awakening" of the early 1800's.

Henkel could not reconcile this method of conversion with the text above. His sermon stated "the ignorance of mankind with respect to God is the cause of many of their miseries." Rather, he believed that conversion occurred through "the proper knowledge of him through the mediator Jesus Christ, and the acceptance of his atonement by the means of grace, the true way of their restoration to happiness." Henkel's idea of conversion was based on instruction, hearing the Word of God, and receiving the sacraments.⁶⁸

He believed in the concept of an omnipresent, loving God, which led him into further denominational differences on pre-destination:

God fills all space. . . . God is Love; therefore Love must fill all space; hence every creature must be surrounded by love, by the atonement of Jesus Christ. Now whosoever supposes that God has confined his Love and the atonement of the cross, to a certain comparatively small number of the human [sic] race, must necessarily deny that God is every where present, and consider him a being of very scanty limitation. To deny the omnipresence of his Love, is the same as denying that he is omnipresent and infinite; because he is Love. . . . there is no design in God to withhold his goodness from any being that will obey his word and use all the appointed means of salvation. . . . The will of man is truly free, and is its own determiner; otherwise if it were not, it would be machinal, moved to act in every case according to the pleasure of its mover. . . . The power to accomplish our will when it chooses good, alone is bestowed upon us by God through his means; when they are properly used.⁶⁹

To David, God's means were the Word and the Sacraments. Was the Word not infallible? Were the sacraments not commanded of God? Henkel thought, "A God of infinite wisdom is the author of them." To suggest that the sacraments were "mere duties and ceremonies" was foreign to him; otherwise, "a wise God would not have instituted them for an insignificant purpose," nor would he have commanded them to be observed by his children.⁷⁰

Also attached to the sermon was a second publication, entitled *A Loud Trumpet of Futurity*, which contained the following then-controversial language:

How vain is the supposition of many, when they imagine that the means of grace are not essential; and that we must receive God's blessings without any external means.⁷¹

The publication of this sermon was not to be a benefit to David Henkel in certain circles. He made no noticeable attempt to avoid confrontation with the other Protestant pastors of the area, as he believed it was "sinful if a minister of the gospel is silent upon things relating to the salvation of immortal souls, merely for the sake of offending some whimsical individuals."⁷²

But the real purpose of the publication was a rebuttal of Schober's *Spirits Scenes*. The title was a play on words of Jung-Stilling's Scene 12 "The Mystery of Futurity". David rejected Jung-Stilling's beliefs. He found science to be a helpful description of God's universe. He rejected Jung-Stilling's belief in the millennium by quoting Matthew 29, verse 36: "'But of that day and hour knoweth know [sic] man, no not the angels of heaven, but my father only.'" He often used the words "spirits" and "scenes" in an almost mocking tone. David rejected spiritualism and mysticism but instead used the words of God. While Jung-Stilling almost never quoted Scripture to validate his philosophy, David constantly used the Bible to support his suppositions. He rejected good works but

68. *Ibid.*

69. *Ibid.*

70. *Ibid.*

71. David Henkel, *A Loud Trumpet of Futurity, or a Few Reflections on Future Things*, (Salisbury: Jacob Krider, 1817), p.

5, under the heading of "Reflection on Resurrection of Dead." This is not considered to be one of David Henkel's best literary efforts, as he sometimes rambles profusely; yet he was not afraid to directly broach the controversial theological issues of the era.

72. David to Solomon, 15 Jan 1814, cited above.

emphasized that faith and repentance were the keys to salvation. Finally, David rejected the conversion experience of the Pietists and suggested that they had chosen their road to salvation "to elevate themselves to high ecclesiastical dignities".⁷³ David's first two publications, while not especially strong pieces of writing, demonstrate his confrontational nature in support of confessional Lutheranism against Pietism and unionism. His writings would not promote his future with the elite of the North Carolina Synod with whom he had clashed.

Yet another complication had arisen within area Union churches. During the period after 1812, there was not a regular German Reformed ministerial presence for many years, and with Philip Henkel's departure, the Lutherans were left with the two young preachers - Catechist David Henkel and Candidate Daniel Moser - neither being ordained as Pastors. With the transition to the English language taking place, many of the Reformed brethren were constrained to choose between the short supply of relatively-inexperienced Lutherans or those of other denominations. If they wanted to commune during 1815, there was only one local Lutheran and no German Reformed Pastor to serve them. This set of circumstances must have looked enticing to the Presbyterians, as they made pronounced advances into previously German-speaking "union" houses. As early as 1808, Presbyterian Pastor Humphrey Hunter was appointed as supply pastor to the unofficial Presbyterian church in Lincolnton -- at the same church where Pastor Arends was buried. By September 5, 1815, Hunter delivered congregations from Emmanuel (Lincolnton), Salem (Lincoln County), and "Shuforth" to the Concord Presbytery. He also reported "that it would be advisable to send supplies to Zion, the Old Meeting House [Old St. Paul's], and St. John's." The Presbytery approved Hunter's report.⁷⁴ Pastors of other faiths also looked toward these vacant pulpits. While most of the named congregations were being served by Daniel Moser (who preferred German), two of them were Henkel congregations -- Old St. Paul's and St. John's.

The original deed for St. John's states the word "Presbyterian," and not "Dutch Presbyterian"; therefore, the Presbyterians could have easily made a claim to land ownership rights at St. John's, although a Civil Court would have been the only authority to settle the issue, had it arisen. There is no evidence that a Presbyterian congregation from a Scottish or Scotch-Irish background had any involvement at St. John's or for that matter originated any present Catawba County church prior to 1840. They did occasionally claim remnants of German Reformed congregations.

Consequently, most of multi-lingual David Henkel's encounters were with English-speaking pastors of other denominations. In February of 1814, young Henkel visited South Carolina, where he appeared at "an independent meeting house in company of a Baptist preacher." The next week, he presented a sermon at Whitehaven, a known German/English "union" church, on "the nature of baptism," and "Mr. Haulkum a Baptist preacher with his party was present." While Henkel baptized two children at this service, he did not likely impress the Baptists with his sermon topic, nor with its sacramental presentation. A week later, he encountered Rev. Humphrey Hunter at Lincolnton, and Hunter witnessed a Henkel sermon and a baptism. In April, while on a return trip to South Carolina, a Pastor Smoke [Rauch, in German?] and three Methodist clergymen were awaiting him. Henkel had quickly gained the attention of his English colleagues of other denominations.⁷⁵

In June of 1815, Henkel was well received at the Church in Charlotte -- a known Presbyterian strong-hold. On another occasion, he preached at New Hope, presumably the Presbyterian Church in current Gaston County. For about two and one-half years, with Henkel then preaching primarily in his brother's former churches, no conflicts are mentioned in his journal; however, there were a few who were becoming troubled with Henkel's "disposition." He held a service at Costner's in September 1816, where "several preachers" were in attendance, and a typical-for-David, doctrinally-controversial, sermon was delivered. He baptized one child, and his sermon topic on this sacrament caused later problems.⁷⁶

⁷³. *Loud Trumpet*, pp. 14, 38-39, 45-46.

⁷⁴. Daniel Wilson Barefoot, *A History of the First Presbyterian Church of Lincolnton, North Carolina*, (Lincolnton: 30 August 1990), pp. 3-9.

⁷⁵. *David Henkel Diary, 1814*. Michael Rauch was a Catechist of the North Carolina Synod serving congregations in South Carolina. His last name means "Smoke" in English. Whether this is actually Rauch cannot be determined from the source.

⁷⁶. *David Henkel Diary, 1815-1818*. Henkel received \$1.75 for preaching four miles below Charlotte, and \$5.25 at the Church in Charlotte which indicates his appeal. At New Hope, 31 March 1816, Henkel "baptized Mr. Hank's family, 5 adults and 1 infant." Andrew Hoyl Deposition, dated 22 Apr 1819, Hinkle Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection, UNC Library. As Henkel preached the *Essence* sermon (cited above) at White Haven that month, it is probable that he delivered the same sermon, or a variant of same, to Costner's.

The year 1818 marked an incredibly-regular sequence of denominational conflicts. In January, Henkel held confirmation classes at Costner's Church. During these classes he opposed inter-marriage between Protestant faiths, stating that "birds of a feather ought to flock together," using the scriptural text, "Be ye not unequally yoked." "Cows and horses" might act likewise. The children of such marriages would ultimately be divided between the mother and the father.⁷⁷ This sort of dissertation served little purpose in improving Henkel's admiration among the non-Lutheran community and ultimate unity of the Protestant denominations in North Carolina.

By March, a dispute was brewing over the "Union Church" custom in the congregations of Long Creek and Beaver Dam. Proposals for a strictly Lutheran "house of Public worship" were made, establishing doctrinal points which all pastors must defend if they wished to enter the proposed pulpit. These included such controversial issues as Christ's divinity, baptism, Holy Communion, and laying on of hands at confirmation. Pulpit access was to be gained by approval of one or more of the church's Elders. Landowner William Vickers opposed these constraints, and viewed them as "insidious and arbitrary, and operating in direct opposition to an important principle of religion, Charity." Amid other objections, Vickers adamantly stated that he would "not give a site for a Meeting house to a dominant sect, to the exclusion of others, at least equally deserving." Beaver Dam Elder Jacob Aderhold responded to Vickers' points of contention, defended the original proposals, and cited scriptural references. Consequently, this Church was never constructed at all, but the case is an illustration of how unionism versus denominationalism affected two local congregations during this era, and David Henkel was the author of these "Proposals."⁷⁸

In May 1818, Henkel preached one night at the house of Edward Jenkins, whereupon he baptized thirteen souls. A few observers remembered his sermon message, that whoever receives the sacramental elements as "an emblem or picture is an idol or idolatrous worshiper." Henkel then explained the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacramental elements, as he believed them.⁷⁹

In July 1818, Henkel encountered revered Presbyterian Pastor James Hall at Costner's Church. Hall was a highly-venerated, elder pastor, who had served the Iredell County Presbyterians continuously for forty years. He had cooperated with the Methodists in the revival movement, and during one of these meetings, met with the strongly-opposing opinion of Paul Henkel. When the Presbytery "passed a resolution forbidding ordained ministers of other churches to help with communion at Presbyterian Churches," it was done so "over a strongly worded protest by James Hall and the Third Creek Pastor," also in Iredell County. Hall wanted to exclude other denominations also, and the Presbyterians had reacted strongly to David Henkel.⁸⁰

The incident between David Henkel and Hall began as David was preaching at his regularly-scheduled, Saturday "preparatory" service, which included confirmation of two and baptism of one. Hall was present and preached afterwards. Henkel believed the senior Hall's purposes were "to dispute" his sacramental doctrine. That night, Henkel and Hall were both guests at David Costner's house, and went out for a walk. Henkel raised the doctrinal question of the "presence of Christ's body and blood" in the Sacrament. He would not allow the subject to

77. Several depositions and letters, presented at the 1819 Synod Meeting, David Hinkle [sic] Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. Many were later published in *Shober's Review*. *David Henkel Diary*, 1818, where confirmation at Costner's was held on January 17, to a class of 34. The text cited is II Cor. 6:14: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

78. Proposals For building a house of Public worship on or between the waters of Bever Dam or Longcreek as the Commissioners may direct, to which is included a response from William Vickers, dated 29 March 1818, and letter from Jacob Aderholdt, dated 16 April 1818. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Long Creek and Beaver Dam are in today's Gaston County. Carpenter, p. 17, who also added that Hephzibah Presbyterian Church, Gaston County, may be on land formerly owned by Vickers. Although the handwriting is not that of David Henkel, the ideas are those he promoted vigorously. *David Henkel Diary*, 1818 lists a Henkel baptism at Longcreek on March 23, 1818, proving him in the area about the time of the proposal. John Harkey, ?others?, [page torn at signatures], Certificate on David Henkel Trial, undated, copy from The Handley Library, Winchester, VA, hereinafter referenced Harkey Certificate, stipulates Henkel as the author of "Proposals" named above.

79. Nathan Davis Certificate, dated 23 Apr 1819, Hinkle Family Papers, Southern Historical Collection, UNC Library. The next day, Henkel preached at Costner's, suggesting Jenkins lived in Gaston County [*David Henkel Diary*, 1818.]

80. Kever, pp. 77, 190. Blair article, *The Newton Enterprise*, cited previously. *David Henkel Diary*, 1818 lists Hall's presence at Costner's. The original motion appears to have only included Methodists, and Hall wanted the other denominations included.

be changed until it was fully resolved between them. Hall reported this encounter to Gottlieb Schober, with the following excerpts:

... from what I saw in him and heard from him, he appeared to me the most assuming and self-important man I ever saw in the sacred desk.

There are several among them [Costner's Church] who wish to hear our clergy; but to this he seems to be opposed. ... There appears to me to be a striking contrast between him and his little brother Philip, with whom I was acquainted, and who preached with me at a communion held in Lincoln; ... 81

The next day, Henkel elected to preach from 1 Corinthians 10:15-16.82

I speak as to wise men: judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

Hall's account to Gottlieb Schober also contained the phrase, "church of our common Lord," which is further indication of his affinity towards Schober's desire for Christian unity.⁸³

Was it coincidental that Henkel preached about baptism in the presence of Baptist Pastors? Was it coincidental that his discourse on the real presence of Christ's body and blood was delivered to Presbyterians, including Pastor Hall? Was it coincidental that all of the 1818 incidents occurred in areas of mixed German/English-speaking ancestry in today's Gaston County, and in presence of English-speaking pastors? Was it coincidental that most of Henkel's conflicts occurred in a fairly localized area not far from Costner's Church? Even David's father found fault with one of David's sacramental sermons, as he remembered a four-hour rambling on "Baptism and the Lord's Supper" as "very long."⁸⁴

By April of 1818, reports of Henkel's difficulties with other denominations (and possibly the backlash of the publications) had reached Gottlieb Schober, who related that in "village after village" he heard of "no peace through Lincoln County."⁸⁵ In October, David sent a letter to Schober in which he explained and scripturally documented the omnipresence of Christ. Schober did not believe that Henkel should preach such doctrine, as it was "a thing to be believed but not explainable," and therefore, would not be easily understood by the congregations. Henkel was further advised by Schober of recent complaints.

I must assure your creditable people of our own Church & the reformed, have not only heard your advance, that whosoever is baptised [sic] & partakes of the supper wants no other & further repentance, but also that whosoever teaches other Doctrines is a false teacher. This my dear Sir is making people secure in forms & not in realities. How easy is it to go to heaven for an adulterous heart to be absolved by Mr. Henkel, and as a seal receive from Mr. Henkel the Sacrament, who by his few words made bread body & wine blood—86

81. *Schober's Review*, pp. 60-62, cited from letter from Rev. Jas. Hall to G. Shober, November 13, 1818. Letter from David Henkel to Philip Henkel and Joseph E. Bell, part of which was dated May 15, 1819 (original not seen, photocopy only), no page numbers, copy from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Apparently Hall disregarded the 1808 resolution of the Presbyterian Synod regarding the Lord's Supper, when he and Philip held joint communion.

82. *Schober's Review*, pp. 60-62.

83. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-62.

84. Eisenberg, p. 135, mentions the four hour sermon.

85. Letter from Gottlieb Schober to Solomon Henkel, 14 April 1818, transl., Old Salem Archives. Comment: It is highly unlikely that Gottlieb Schober ever made an appearance in St. John's, and several other congregations.

86. Letter from Gottlieb Shober to David Henkel, 20 October 1818, copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. If Henkel preached salvation by the sacraments only, this doctrinal position is not found in his written work, "The Essence of the Christian Religion," or his later writings. The traditional Lutheran doctrine of the "Real Presence" was apparently not understood nor taught by Schober.

There was likely a reaction to the complaint by James Hall and others. When Henkel requested the sources of Schober's information, Schober replied, "if you wish for an examination of the truth, you can expect it at Conferenz [sic] when you may receive & hear the authors [of the complaints]. . . ."87

Such was the negative tone of Schober's entire letter, and Schober had now threatened Henkel with a "trial" at the upcoming Synod, if Henkel continued preaching in similar manner.

Regarding sacramental practice and teachings, Henkel openly invited "repenting sinners" to the Lord's Supper, when he stated, "It is no excuse for people to say, that they are not worthy to commune; for this proves that their case is awfully dangerous: it shews [sic] that they do not love God; because they have no relish for heavenly nourishment; they are therefore in a state of condemnation, for disobeying God's institution!" Henkel also felt that "by the communion we become united here and establish a brotherhood with each other . . . also a communion with angels . . . for they love to be in his glorious presence. How astonishing it is that so many of our fellow-pilgrims exclude themselves from this privilege!" Schober believed that the unbeliever did not partake of the body and blood of Christ, but rather, merely the symbols of bread and wine, as "God & Belial can not unite."88

The Synod's position was now well-known, as it had been published in *Luther* and was widely distributed. An altered version of the Augsburg Confession was included, either by Schober or by the publisher. This translation was apparently written to avoid written obstacles which would preclude denominational unity. Only the first twenty-two articles were included, as Schober felt "the rest related to doctrines, now entirely obtruse, and respecting catholicism." One change was in Article 10, on the subject of the Lord's Supper. Where the unaltered confession states that "the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present and are communicated to those that eat in the Lord's Supper . . .," *Luther* says, "the body and blood of Christ are really present, and are given and administered under the external signs of bread and wine." While not a flagrant modification, the strength of the language is less emphatic, "external signs" implies symbolism, and the original includes "those who eat" -- implying both believers and unbelievers.89

But the tenth article of the unaltered Augsburg Confession continues: "And they disapprove of those that teach otherwise." Several others include similar language.90

On Monday, November 2, 1818, Henkel and Daniel Moser began a trip to Salem, and arrived at Gottlieb Schober's house on Wednesday morning, where they stayed most of the day. The details of this meeting are not known, but it must have been in direct response to Schober's recent letter, and partially in an effort to "disapprove of those that teach otherwise" -- namely Synod Secretary Schober. Henkel was also careful to enlist a quite respectable witness to the conversations -- Daniel Moser. On their return trip, Henkel and Moser spent Friday night with St. John's Elder, Frederick Hoke, and based on following events, Mr. Hoke was not well-pleased with what was reported.91

On one occasion during this general period of time (possibly this same meeting), there was a heated doctrinal discussion between Henkel and an unnamed person (presumably Schober) over the conversion process, which Henkel believed included the sacrament of baptism. Henkel presented his views, by using references from the Bible. His disputant was enraged, and defiantly responded as follows:

87. *Ibid.*

88. *Ibid. Essence.*

89. *Luther*, pp. 97, 106. *Carolimon Herald*, p. 33. Henry E. Jacobs, D. D., *The Lutheran Book of Concord; or, The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. With Historical Introduction, Notes, Appendices and Indices*, Vol. I, (Wescott & Thompson, Philadelphia: 1882), p. 40, hereinafter referenced *Jacobs BC*. This, plus several other translations available at Carl A. Rudisill Library, Lenoir Rhyne College, were examined. The text changes slightly from translation to translation, with the general meaning unchanged. Nowhere were the words "external signs" to be found in any of them; however, one German translation uses the term "form", but it also states that the body and blood are "received," without qualification of the recipient. In *Shaber's Review*, Schober contended that the altered version was a translation obtained from the printer, and not from his own pen.

90. *Jacobs BC*, p. 40, with "wherefore also the opposite doctrine is rejected" in parentheses.

91. *David Henkel Diary, 1818*. Henkel only listed staying over at Schober's house on two other occasions, and were stop-overs on a trip elsewhere.

This trip appears well-planned, with a visit with Schober being the sole purpose.

Therefore, I give nothing to what you say; I believe nothing from you, as I know I am a child of God; I take this from no person, from no scholar, nor from the devil; that which I know, I know.⁹²

This discussion unfortunately concluded with a physical assault. Henkel, with his physical infirmity, would seem to have been at a decided disadvantage in such an encounter. Henkel later reflected:

That he does not receive another person's opinion, who also has his belief, and that he will take no evils, he truly has not to fear, particularly where he is willing to defend his opinion with the fist.⁹³

The timing of the recent sequence of events is critical. Henkel and Hall had their disagreement over the sacrament in July of 1818. Schober's admonishing letter to Henkel was dated October 20, and the Henkel/Moser conference with Schober was on November 4. Yet Pastor Hall's letter of complaint was dated on November 13, 1818 -- nine days after the trip to Salem. Why did Hall wait so long to register his complaint? Or rather, why did Hall wait so long to issue it **in writing**???

By the end of 1818, the Presbyterians in Lincoln had become "very bitter" towards David, due to his insistence on sacramental importance and "laying on of hands." He was often described as "the Catholic Priest from Lincoln," which only served to increase his audiences, as most people had probably never heard a Catholic Priest before.⁹⁴

During early 1819, denominational unrest swirled around David Henkel. In January, Henkel encountered some problems at a service at a Mr. Evans' house, as he "was abused after sermon by Mr. Wilkie, a Baptist preacher." The very next week, at a regular visit to the Morning Star congregation in Mecklenburg County, a Pastor Greer, who is described as a "Seceder clergyman," was present.⁹⁵

Synod President Storch was in general agreement with Schober relative to synodical issues. While he may have agreed with Henkel on some doctrinal matters, he did not teach them with the same force, and preferred accord with the other denominations. Henkel described Storch in 1821 as "extremely pitiful. . . . He was a man of good qualities, highly venerated, and very popular. But being aged, full of bodily infirmities, which, in the nature of things, have a tendency to impair his mind." Henkel also believed that Storch was being influenced by Schober.⁹⁶

But Schober had been accused of failing to adhere to Lutheran doctrine before. Solomon Henkel wrote a letter to Schober in mid-1816, wherein he challenged Schober's Lutheranism. Solomon advised his friend that he had heard that North and South Carolina Lutheran pastors were not accurately reflecting Lutheran doctrine when they preached on predestination and the sacraments and suggested there could be a "wide separation" over these matters. At the time of this letter, David was visiting his family and preaching in and around New Market on some of these same topics. In his response, Schober did not defend the practices and theological positions of the Carolina pastors, nor did he offer his own doctrinal views. Rather, he preferred to emphasize positive alignment with practices and teachings of "the Pennsylvania brethren," many of whom preached these same doctrines. Those who were not willing to agree "will remove out of the circle . . . as the chaff will come from the wheat."⁹⁷

Henkel was in conflict with two of the senior pastors of the Synod, as well as several respected senior pastors of other denominations.

92. *Kurze Nachricht*, pp. 33-34.

93. *Ibid.* RCC: Mark interpreted this German passage to indicate a physical assault. I am uncertain whether the writer is describing an historical event or a making a symbolic statement using metaphors.

94. David to Solomon, 4 Dec. 1818, UVA, 8653-c, Box 1, 1816-1819, Letters from David Henkel.

95. *David Henkel Diary, 1814-1819*. None of these encounters appears to be in today's Catawba or Lincoln Counties. Although Pastor Greer is not well-identified by this author, a "seceder" was probably a branch of the Presbyterian Church or a Baptist. RCC: Note from Anne McAllister shows that Rev. William Wilkie Jr. (1776-1855) was an outstanding Baptist minister who was the father of two Baptist ministers.

96. *Caroliner Herald*, p. 30. Letter from Jonathan Hartzel, 9 January 1825, Charles L. Coon Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

97. Schober to Solomon, 22 June 1816, German, MESDA, 3995-36. The actual letter from Solomon to Schober, 4 June 1816, has not been located. The interpretation is based on Schober's response, and his change in attitude towards his friend Solomon.

ORDINATION DIFFICULTIES

To complicate matters further, Henkel was not yet ordained as a full minister, and a transition in ordination practice had evolved within the Synod as he matured.

Due to absence of seminaries, the "licensure" system was necessary for obtaining pastors in the early nineteenth century. An aspiring servant could receive a license to preach, baptize, marry, and/or bury at specific congregations, and usually for a one year term. This limited license was known as "Catechist," and he was placed under the guidance of a senior pastor who administered Holy Communion and performed certain other functions. After proving himself worthy, the "licensee" could advance to the title of "Candidate," which allowed slightly more latitude and conferred more responsibilities. Later, after completion of this "apprenticeship," and upon successful examination, he could be fully ordained as Pastor. During Henkel's path towards full ordination, synodical procedures were in a state of experimentation and change. While the licensure system was far from a safeguard to ensure doctrinal purity, the German standard of education was unfeasible and financially burdensome to the pioneer pastors of the Carolina frontier.⁹⁸

David's father, Paul, had experienced ordination difficulties with the Pennsylvania Synod, whose leadership was composed of a nucleus of German-educated pastorate. He was licensed on June 15, 1783. Year after year, his churches presented petitions to the Pennsylvania Synod for his ordination. Finally, the Synod fully ordained him on June 6, 1792 -- nine years later.⁹⁹

In accordance with the ordination custom, young David Henkel, after serving for a period of time under pastors in South Carolina, became "licensed" or was ordained as a "Catechist" by them. This was independent of synodical consent, which was acceptable practice at that time. At the next Synod Meeting in 1813, Henkel appeared with a petition from a congregation in Lincoln County. The North Carolina Synod was ill-prepared for a "licensed" 18-year-old, without formal education, to approach them for consent to preach. The rules were immediately changed, so all licenses and ordinations thereafter required consent of Synod, and a communication was sent to the Pennsylvania Synod asking their advice on the subject. Henkel's license, although not originally gained under the new rule, was renewed upon successful examination for one year. Schober believed that this license, "out of respect for his father and brother, was reluctantly consented to, for he was too young."¹⁰⁰

During the 1814 Synod meeting at Organ Church, David Henkel's ordination question re-appeared, when the Synod was obliged to act on three petitions from churches in Lincoln County, and a fourth petition on behalf of Daniel Moser. Although Moser was advanced to Candidate status based on one petition, Henkel's Catechist license was renewed after consideration of three petitions. Synod then decided, "That hereafter no uneducated person should receive license to preach until he has studied with one of our pastors and is twenty-one years of age." As the nineteen-year-old Henkel thought he was approaching ordination, the Synod placed it farther from him. The Synod also requested Philip Henkel to relocate to the missionary field in Tennessee, leaving Catechist David and Candidate Moser with Philip's growing field of labor.¹⁰¹

It was at this meeting where sectional division along the Catawba River began to fester. Since Arends' blindness, and probably prior to this time, the western Piedmont was not preferred by the North Carolina Synod. From 1803 to 1805, Paul Henkel, often on his own initiative, served these congregations in a supply role. When he relocated to Virginia, the youngest Lutheran Pastor in North Carolina, Philip Henkel, arrived west of the Catawba. In 1810, Philip reported eight of the twenty-four North Carolina congregations in synodical connection -- a larger number than any other reporting pastor. Two years later, it was Philip Henkel who was selected to perform missionary services for about four months, requiring him to vacate his congregations for this lengthy period of time. After nine years of faithful service, the only German-speaking, ordained, Pastor was removed to Tennessee, and he was not replaced by an established, ordained Pastor of bi-lingual abilities. The eastern group of Pastors usually served less than six fairly well-established congregations, with some serving only two or three regularly. In 1816, there were about sixty congregations and an estimated six thousand souls in the North Carolina Synod, being

98. Morgan, pp. 35-38.

99. *PA Synod Minutes*, pp. 187-247.

100. *N. C. Synod Minutes, 1813*, transl., Bernheim & Cox, p. 43. *Schober's Review*, p. 17.

101. *N. C. Synod Minutes, 1814*, transl., Bernheim & Cox, p. 44.

served by twenty-five pastors, candidates, or catechists. Yet unordained David Henkel and Daniel Moser were left with nearly one-fourth of the Synod's congregations and a corresponding ratio of the total membership.

With this workload and broad geography, coupled with the revisions to the ordination rules, Henkel and Moser now had little opportunity to gain theological instruction under a senior pastor. Notwithstanding the Synod's evolving ordination policies, Henkel was allowed to preach the Gospel. His energy must have been amazing, and his abilities in the pulpit, captivating, as his annual reports for sermons-preached and baptisms-performed ranked at, or near, the top of Synodical statistics year after year. Moser's statistics were usually not far behind. The area west of the Catawba was rapidly growing, the Lutheran churches were prospering, but the Synod gave them little respect. In retrospect, the ordination policies under these pressed conditions are confounding, and it is of little surprise that the apparent disregard for the spiritual needs of the Catawba Churches would be the source for further problems.

The 1815 Synod meeting was held at Emmanuel Church, in Lincoln, and Philip Henkel was elected President due to the illness of Pastor Miller and absence of others. At this meeting, the Synod wrestled further with ordination qualifications. The office of catechist was re-defined, allowing only reading of sermons, singing hymns, discussion, and emergency baptisms. Measures were introduced to reduce the status of a catechist or Candidate, under certain circumstances, such as "indolence, loss of courage, care or anxiety for daily bread, etc.." Upon petition, David Henkel was promoted to Candidate on Tuesday, October 17th, and Moser's status was renewed. The subject of "laying on of hands" at ordination became an issue at this meeting. David's congregations believed that candidates should have full authority to serve Holy Communion being properly blessed with the "laying on of hands". Further discussion of the issue was deferred until the next meeting, which was scheduled for the newly-completed Reformed Church in Guilford County.¹⁰²

At the appointed location in 1816, 21-year-old Henkel and colleague Daniel Moser anticipated their ordination. In the early transactions, Synod again frustrated the ordination issue. Since 1813, the Synod had been attempting to align its practices with the Pennsylvania Ministerium, and had sent a letter requesting its opinions on ordination. One of the questions was whether a Candidate should be allowed to administer Holy Communion and confirm new members if he had not been ordained by "the laying on of hands." Those in Lincoln County felt that the sacramental elements could not be blessed by one who himself had not been blessed in this manner. Acts 8:17 cites, "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Henkel was adamant on several occasions that this was a scripturally-defined method of receiving the Holy Spirit, it was a "means of grace," and it was necessary for continuation of apostolic succession. In 1814, Pennsylvania must have been uncertain as to the answer, and requested their senior Pastors to prepare written statements for review at the next meeting. In 1815, Pennsylvania added the grade of "Deacon" to the ministerial progression. Essentially, a "Deacon" was the same as "Candidate," except he would be ordained through the laying on of hands. They stated that "a written permit can be regarded just as valid as the laying on of hands; . . . candidates, if they are licensed, can, with a good conscience, perform all ministerial acts." Pennsylvania also stipulated that "none could be made pastors, such as had not received systematic instruction by an ordained preacher for the term of three years, and had done something in the languages," without which, an aspirant would forever be licensed as a Deacon or Candidate.¹⁰³ With little forewarning, the North Carolina Synod, in its early sessions of 1816, agreed to the additional grade of the ministry and to the three year period of theological study under a senior pastor.¹⁰⁴ Lack of local institutions of higher education rendered improvement in Greek and Hebrew nearly impossible.

Synod then turned its attention to congregational petitions, and eleven petitions were presented promoting ordination of David and Daniel Moser. St. John's was represented by "Frederick Hoke," who described himself as "though being a member of the Reformed Church, I have communed with the Lutherans."¹⁰⁵ This petition was in

102. *NC Synod Minutes, 1815*, transl., Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 25. Bernheim & Cox, p. 44. Philip Henkel was later criticized for presiding over his brother's advancement. By these transactions, did Philip Henkel temporarily soothe the sectional difficulties and prolong them for one more year? Jacob Sherer to Schober, 26 Oct 1815, RGNCs, 1.0.1., Folder #1.

103. *PA Synod Minutes, 1814-1815*, pp. 471, 482, 494. There is no known documentation as to who began the controversy over "laying on of hands." It seems doubtful that David Henkel, who wished for his Catechist license to be renewed in 1813, began the discussion leading to the PA inquiry. The subject is not mentioned in earlier Henkel letters.

104. *NC Synod Minutes, 1816*, p. 8.

105. Frederick Hoke Certificate, 6 Nov 1819, THL.

the German language, and stipulated that St. John's members were unified in their request for David Henkel's ordination. It was complimentary of David's period of service. "Johannes" Church was "aggrieved" with the past actions of Synod, but was willing to forgive everything if David Henkel would be ordained. If this request was refused by Synod,

"JOHANNES" CHURCH BREAKS OFF!!!!!!

The ultimatum was signed by the following members:

Peter Little
Jacob Hefner
John Smith
John Holler
John Eisenhower
John Moser
John Hefner
Philip Eisenhower
Christopher Sigman
Jacob Stine
Jacob Moser
Barnet Sigmon
Daniel Hoke
John Null
Josiph Eisenhower
Henry Yount
Henry Stine
Daniel Summit
Francis Moser
Peter Moser
George Yount
John Stine Senr
Peter Treffelsed
Polser Sigman
Henry Daganhard
William Sigman
Anthony Moose
John Moser
Peter Little, Junr
Jacob Little
John Stine
William Lavont
John Eisenhower Junr
Henry Rosemen
Adam Null
Jacob Roseman
George Bowman
Peter Rauch
Daniel Eisenhower
Peter Mack
Jacob Fulbright
John Moos
John Seller
George Sigman

"But this was not approved."¹⁰⁷ When the Synod initially decided to renew the Candidate status of Henkel and Moser, the sectionalism problem manifest itself. Hoke "vehemently" asserted that "there had been confusion" in the churches, and that it was considered "anti-christian for somebody who has not been ordained to administer the holy sacraments." David and Philip contended that the "laying on of hands" was proper ordination practice, and the delegates insisted upon ordination in this manner. Synod leaders opposed revision of the newly-adopted rules with "sternness," viewed this uprising as improper, and responded that only a minister could determine eligibility for ordination.¹⁰⁸ During this interchange, Schober openly insulted Hoke, by saying, "Here comes a deputy from Lincoln, who wishes to rule us, who even does not belong to us."¹⁰⁹ Furthermore, the Synod had concerns that deviation from the ordination policy could separate them in practice from the members of the Pennsylvania Synod. To avert the "bitterness from Lincoln," Schober suggested a compromise, which would "ordain" the two Candidates to their current office by "laying on of hands" and presentation of a certificate, and that this modification to normal procedures be allowed for only one year. This innovation was openly protested by Synod President Storch as "contrary to our church government, and succumbing to rebellious youngsters." After much discussion, Storch declined to perform the ordinations, and the duties were conferred to Schober. Henkel was granted "full power to do unrestricted service, and to perform the sacraments in all congregations," and was praised for his "charity and praisable [sic] interest and talent with good aptitude connected with unrepachable conduct." Henkel's Diary entry cites that he was ordained "with great dissatisfaction." Opinionated phrases crept into synodical record, when it stated that "one or two otherwise thinking individuals among us should yield that much from motives of love."¹¹⁰

Would the members of St. John's ever forget the perceived mistreatment of its delegate and pastor at the hands of the 1816 Synod leaders? Were there now even more "otherwise thinking individuals among us"? A delegate from St. John's never again attended a regular North Carolina Synod meeting, but neither the congregation nor its pastor officially withdrew from Synod.

During the course of the following year, Paul Henkel, who was absent from the 1816 meeting, was advised by Schober of the ordination dispute. Schober wanted no more protests over licensure. Paul believed that David should calm down on his insistence on "the laying on of hands," believed that the Pennsylvania method of training and obtaining pastors had been successful, and scolded his son to maintain peace. David responded with a letter justifying the ordination practice with Biblical reference.¹¹¹

The discussion about ordination practice did not abate, but escalated. Philip agreed with David that "laying on of hands" was Biblically commanded. Daniel Moser experienced dissension in his congregations and some members were threatening to leave. R. J. Miller believed it was a "divine institution" and that Pennsylvania had made some mistake. Some were undecided, and others believed the practice was merely ceremony or ritual.¹¹²

106. Petition von Linkoln, various dates, RG:NCS, 1.0.1, Folder #2. The petition from "Johannes" Church (14 September 1816) also included the following names from "Alte Kirche" (Old St. Paul's): Jacob Lutz, Casper Bolick, George Lutz, Adam Bolick, Simon Hass, Miel Cline, John Probst, George Smith, David Bolch, Daniel Gladfelder, Elias Smyer, William Bost, Jacob Star, Jonas Bost, Elias Bost, Jacob Bolch, and Jacob Hoyle. Jacob Lutz and Casper Bolick were the Elders. The petition from Lebanon specifically requested David's ordination "with the imposition of hands." School House Church and Lebanon had petitions for both David and Moser.

107. *Schober's Review*, p. 18.

108. *NC Synod Minutes, 1816*, pp. 10-11.

109. Frederick Hoke Certificate, cited above.

110. *NC Synod Minutes, 1816*, p. 11. *Caroliman Herald*, p. 9. *Schober's Review*, p. 18. *David Henkel Diary, 1816*.

111. Paul to Solomon, 20 Jan 1817 and 26 July 1817, UVA, 8653-i, Box 1, Folder 1813-1817. Paul to David, 26 May 1817, Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

112. Over eleven letters or other contemporary sources which discuss this issue have been located, including letters from Paul, Philip, Solomon, Daniel Moser, J. Peter Schmucker, R. J. Miller, and Jacob Scherer. It is possible that Schober communicated with them, and requested their opinions prior to 1817. They are all located in the Lutheran Archives RGNCS, 1.0.1., Folder #2.

Following this important 1816 Synod meeting Rev. R. J. Miller responded to a correspondence from Rev. Schober. Miller mentioned "Hoke's or D[avid]'s threat". He could not understand "why these young men should be so pressing to have power & authority in their hands, especially when we consider the very slender qualifications some of them possess, & why the people should wish it, & push them on. . . ." He encouraged Schober that they should proceed with "caution" and not succumb to their "rashness". He closed the letter by recognizing that Hoke's charge of "inconsistency" with ordination practices was perhaps correct in one instance but he still rejected his argument as having "no foundation".¹¹³

Prior to the 1817 Synod meeting David published **Essence of the Christian Religion and Loud Trumpet of Futurity**. R. J. Miller saw the publications in the St. Johns community at the home of "F[rederick] H[oke], our very good friend the deputy from L[incoln] to G[uilford]". He observed:

What D[avid] aims at I could not well discover from a very hasty [sic] perusal of it, unless it was to go a great way roundabout in order to give a fair blast of his Trumpet, for that is the title he gives it. At Some of his Superiors, in age & office, at least, if not of wisdom goodness, & learning; for depriving the people of their liberty & freedom of choice, & their right, by not complying with their call to ordain such men as him, who are only rejected out of mere Jealousy & fear of their, or his, superior learning, gifts & talents; & least themselves, i. e. C. A. S[tork], G. S[chober], & I suppose R. M[iller] too, should be thrown thereby quite into the back ground. this at least appears to be one of the objects, the little bigman has in view or aims at. . . .¹¹⁴

Miller's sarcastic description of **Loud Trumpet** exposed David's rather direct attack on un-named "false prophets and proud preachers" whom he also called "hypocrites". David's words described them as ones:

who hid their deceitfulness under the cloak of affected sanctity, disfiguring their natural countenances [sic] and imagining themselves better than others. They spake reproachfully of many, who did not agree with them in their party speculations, and pronounced men of genuine worth, unawakened and unconverted; because they could not relate the same experience; as they imagined they should. . . because their aim was not to glorify God by their ministry, but to elevate themselves to high ecclesiastical dignities, to rule over other ministers with absolute power, and to rob the people of their spiritual liberties. - Consequently they were very careful not to encourage men of learning and piety in the ministry, because they feared that they would be out shone in the publick [sic] eye, which might diminish their power, which they worshiped, which conduct they seemingly justified under the pretence of precaution.¹¹⁵

David's words stung his adversaries and did not benefit him within the North Carolina Synod. Miller closed his letter by agreeing to move the Synod meeting to Storch's congregation since "it would be much more useful to the people & comfortable to ourselves" even though it may "put a staff into the hands of enemies".¹¹⁶ These circumstances set the stage for the 1817 Synod meeting.

No Lincoln County delegates attended the 1817 Synod meeting, when the question of Candidates administering the sacrament without the "laying on of hands" arose once again. David had prepared a thesis he wished to read, and Philip requested that Schober allow this. The ensuing vote was five to one, with R. J. Miller dissenting, that the policy be unchanged, and both Candidates were renewed rather than advanced. Later, another ordination requirement was added. "Young ministers," in addition to written evidence of yearly service, could be advanced "only according to the amount of work done." If the amount of work and pastoral statistics were to be the ground rules for ordination, both Henkel and Moser should have been ordained several years earlier.¹¹⁷

Yet Henkel left this meeting satisfied, believing that all business had been conducted "mannerly & peaceably." This seems unusual, as he was not yet ordained. David must have felt that his ordination was determined, and it is unquestionable, that this news would have spread quickly throughout Lincoln County. David

¹¹³ R. J. Miller to Schober, 9 Dec 1816, RGNCs, 1.0.1, Folder #2.

¹¹⁴ R. J. Miller to Schober, 15 Jul 1817, cited above.

¹¹⁵ *Loud Trumpet*, pp. 45-46.

¹¹⁶ Miller to Schober, 15 Jul 1817, same as above.

¹¹⁷ *Carolinian Herald of Liberty*, p. 28, cited from *NC Synod Minutes - 1817*. The name of Andrew Killian (possible St. John's member) is written on the cover of the pamphlet, found in Perkins Library of Duke University, with that of David ?Seagles? and W. Sumner, Esq. *NC Synod Minutes - 1817*, appended to *Luther*. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, transl., p. 32-33. Philip to Schober, 3 Sep 1817, RG:NCS, 1.0.1, Folder #2. There must have been some doubt that David would attend the upcoming meeting, and Philip assures Schober David plans to attend. He advises that David and Moser should be ordained.

was also appointed to be the traveling missionary to the Louisiana territory, against the understandable wishes of his congregations. After all, at that time he had a six-week circuit of five regular Sunday congregations, thirteen occasional congregations where he could preach during the week, and invitations to preach from six more. To the satisfaction of the congregations, and to Henkel's dismay, his horse unexpectedly died, and he could not easily buy another which could pull his chaise. The Louisiana trip was canceled, and he believed this was the will of the Lord.¹¹⁸

THE "UNTIMELY" SYNOD

At the 1817 meeting, it was decided to change the meeting time from fall to spring, and further meetings were to be held, beginning in 1819, "annually on Trinity Sunday, in rotation of Counties." This language is found in the "Constitution," Article II, as published in *Luther*. Neither Henkel nor Moser were to be ordained in 1818, as there was no meeting of Synod scheduled.¹¹⁹

The Minutes of the 1817 stated that "Daniel Moser be ordained on next Trinity Sunday"; yet when these minutes were attached to *Luther*, which was published a year later, the ordinations of Henkel and others were listed. On page 175, it reads:

The following Candidates to be consecrated next

Trinity.

David Henkel's name was at the top of the list that followed, and Moser's name was grouped with the previously-ordained pastors.¹²⁰

During this period of about one and one half years, as Henkel had several of his confrontations with other denominations, tensions within certain pastors and congregations worsened. Whereas the Minutes stated that only Daniel Moser was scheduled to be ordained the following Trinity, when *Luther* reached the hands of the informed readers, Schober was alerted to the "great mistake" in the published ordination list. Schober then proceeded to paste a small piece of paper over the word "Trinity" in the copies at his disposal, and encouraged others to do likewise. Philip Henkel ordered 500 copies, and David, about three hundred.¹²¹

In 1818, leaders of the North Carolina Synod were approached to send a delegate to the General Synod Meeting to be held in Baltimore in 1819 -- on the very same Trinity Sunday. This alliance was considered very important to many Synod leaders, and steps were taken to attend the conference. The possibility of the General Synod seemed to offer many advantages. The principal argument was that in unison, the Lutheran Churches in this country could possibly build a seminary to educate promising students for the ministry. Other benefits of union included the ability of a larger group of Lutherans to support missions, minister's widows, and poor ministers. Its foundation would ensure pastor reciprocity between states -- where the pastors of one state could be recognized and accepted in another state with equal rank and privilege.¹²²

However, Philip Henkel and Joseph E. Bell had established a school named Union Seminary in Tennessee, were promoting its merits to the North Carolina Synod, and had inquired about the possibilities of a printing press. In 1817, this Seminary was "adopted as our own Seminary, and as worthy of our management and patronage." Would alliance with the northern Synods make support of any seminary effort much more likely to occur within the boundaries of the state of Pennsylvania, rather than the frontiers of Tennessee?¹²³

118. David to Solomon, 4 Dec 1818 and 29 Oct 1817, UVA, 8653-c, Box 1, 1816-1819, Letters from David Henkel. Afterwards, David reiterated the fact that he was to be ordained in 1819 in at least two publications and one letter.

119. *Luther*, p. 153.

120. *Luther*, p. 175. This copy was seen at Lineberger Library, Southern Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbia, SC. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, 1817, p. 33, only lists Daniel Moser as scheduled for ordination "next Trinity Sunday."

121. Letter from Gottlieb Schober to Solomon Henkel, transl., 9 May 1818, copy from Old Salem Archives. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 40.

122. *Schober's Review*, pp. 10-14.

123. *N. C. Synod Minutes - 1817*, p. 11. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 34. Gottlieb Schober to Solomon Henkel, 9 May 1818, partially

There was an established German printing operation, Schaeffer and Maund, in Baltimore. Would organization of a general synod affect the success of the Henkel Press at New Market, Virginia? After all, *Luther* was sent to the Baltimore printer, not New Market. Also, the German Hymn Book, *Gemeindeschäftliche Gesangbuch*, published by Schaeffer and Maund was recommended to all congregations in the North Carolina Synod in 1817.¹²⁴

There were doctrinal discussions against the General Synod, including whether this type of organization conformed to the teachings of the Augsburg Confession or the Bible. Philip Henkel thought:

Now in our own day, we must have a central assembly of course, or a Federal Head to Rule all the people of God. We must be like our heathen neighbors . . . What has it amounted to -- to popery.¹²⁵

But the primary philosophical argument against the General Synod was the suppression of individual liberties--both religious and political. Many Lutherans were aware of the religious oppression in Europe, which contributed to the great German migration to this country. They also remembered how the Catholic church had gained control of many European governments, and church and state had become hopelessly inter-connected. Oppression of religious freedoms by many colonial governments had not been forgotten, as it was only about fifty years before, that the Royal Governor had attempted to place its selected clergy over the citizens of St. Luke's Parish, of Rowan County. Although, the Revolutionary War and the Constitution of the United States had settled many of these matters, the political system was still trying to find the proper relationship between individual rights, state rights, and centralized government. Would creation of a centralized church government do the same in the United States as it had done in Europe?

Synod leaders decided that acceptance of the invitation to the Baltimore meeting was desirable, and a few of them re-scheduled the 1819 meeting from Trinity Sunday to April in order to chose a suitable delegate, as well as to transact its regular business. David Henkel's notice of this change of date was written by Secretary Schober on February 10, 1819, where he stated the revised date as the "2d Sunday after Easter. I thought, and am nearly sure, that I gave information of this to North, West, South, & East." The doctrinal subject of discussion at the Synod meeting was stated, as believed by "true Lutherans, of which I wish to be one. . . ." No mention was made to David Henkel of the reason for the change of date, nor of any upcoming confrontation, as Schober had threatened four months earlier.¹²⁶

The first signal of dissatisfaction occurred in Tennessee. While Philip Henkel's date of notification is not known, Schober wrote a letter to Solomon on the same date as his letter to David (February 10), expressing his preparation for the upcoming Baltimore meeting. To Schober, it was a foregone conclusion that the General Synod would be approved, and that he would be the delegate.¹²⁷

When Philip heard about the change of date, he was outraged. A notice of less than two months was insufficient for him and others to make the preparations for approximately a three or four week trip to North Carolina -- especially during the Spring communion season, when preaching appointments were usually very frequent and scheduled months in advance. He corresponded to his father for input on the matter, as he intended to be in North Carolina on Trinity Sunday. Paul Henkel advised Philip not to go on Trinity. But Philip had already written letters to ten pastors to encourage them not to attend the early meeting, and to notify them that he would be present for the official Synod on the prescribed date -- Trinity Sunday. He did not think Storch, Schober and Miller constituted the entire Synod, and was dismayed that the distant pastors were not extended proper

transl, Old Salem Archives. J. E. Bell to Solomon Henkel, 17 April 1819, Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, 8653-d, Box 3, Folder "Miscellaneous Correspondence." *Luther*, p. 173. The exact language varies from translation to translation.

124. *Luther*, p. 172.

125. Letter from Philip Henkel to David Henkel, 14 March 1820, with copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wantz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

126. Letter from Gottlieb Schober to David Henkel, February 10, 1819, copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wantz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Written reports conflict as to whether Philip Henkel received proper notice of the change of date, and Schober qualifies whether he did or not, by the words "I thought, and am nearly sure." David Henkel had obviously accused Schober of not being Lutheran prior to this letter, as the underlines in the text are that of Schober.

127. Schober to Solomon, 10 Feb 1819, MESDA.

courtesy.¹²⁸ His official reason for not being in attendance at the early meeting was "because I had not been officially notified of the reasons for the premature meeting." He also considered the meeting as unconstitutional.¹²⁹ Some of the other Tennessee Pastors and Catechists reported that they had received no notice of the change of date whatsoever.¹³⁰

This entire disagreement was totally avoidable. The Pennsylvania Synod had met in 1818 on Trinity Sunday, and the resolution was approved for examination into the merits, and subsequent approval, of a General Synod on May 20, 1818. Schober knew of this resolution ahead of time, when he sent a letter to Solomon describing the possibilities.¹³¹ This was about the same time that *Luther* was ready for distribution. If the leaders of Synod wished to change the date of the 1819 meeting, or to call a special session, it could have easily been accomplished in summer of 1818. Alternatively, a notice could have been printed and distributed with *Luther*.¹³²

Nevertheless, on April 26, 1819, Candidates David Henkel and Daniel Moser attended the rescheduled North Carolina Synod meeting, and were anticipating ordination. Five pastors, four candidates, five catechists, and twelve lay delegates attended. The first matter of business was the stir created by Philip regarding the change of date. Four pastors and six candidates and catechists were absent, "whose excuse and complaint were that the time span from the issuance of the call to the time of the meeting was too brief to enable pastors at a distance to reach the place of meeting."¹³³ Not in attendance were Paul Henkel and those from Tennessee, including Philip Henkel, Adam Miller, George Easterly, Jacob Zink, Joseph E. Bell, and the delegates from their churches.

Rev. Philip Henkel requested them [Synod] by letters, which were received and read in April, to meet on Trinity following, as prescribed by rule; also stating that he had received no timely nor official notice of their premature meeting.¹³⁴

Philip predicted to Schober that there would be an ordination according to rule on Trinity Sunday. The North Carolina Synod Minutes stated, "All knew of it, and here Phillip Henkel began to dictate (command) in a letter." Joseph E. Bell later admitted that he was persuaded not to attend. Accusations were made that Philip Henkel and Joseph E. Bell had "shown a disposition to disturb our peace, by writing letters of attack to various ministers of our ministerium."¹³⁵ All these statements were made by Gottlieb Schober and included in various publications.

To avoid similar misunderstandings, Synod resolved at this meeting to permit the President, with two or three other pastors, to call for a special meeting of Synod in the future.¹³⁶ This was enacted *after* they had already done so.

After sanctioning this as the official annual meeting, matters turned to Philip Henkel, and his Union Seminary in Tennessee. By 1818, this school was situated on about six acres of land and consisted of two buildings. Courses were established in English, German, Latin, and Greek, with Joseph E. Bell being the primary teacher. It was hoped that this school could provide a solid educational foundation for aspirants for the ministry.¹³⁷

In 1817, Synod had agreed that the seminary effort was "under the inspection of the Rev. Philip Henkel and Joseph E. Bell. It is to be continued under the direction of this synod, for the purpose of educating young men to the gospel ministry." Synod further recommended the school to the "fostering care of all our congregations and Christian friends," etc..¹³⁸

128. Philip to Solomon, 10 May 1819, UVA, 8653-i, Box 2, 1819-1823, 1829.

129. "Deposition from Philip Henkel," 11 Sept 1829, NC Supreme Court Papers, NC Archives, Folder 1531.

130. Paul to Solomon, 30 Oct 1819, UVA, 8653-i, Box 1, 1818-1820. Paul related that Pastors Zink, Easterly, Miller, and Bell were not notified.

131. Schober to Solomon, 9 May 1818, German, MESDA.

132. *Ibid.*

133. Eisenberg, pp. 134-135.

134. *Carolman Herald*, p. 28.

135. *Schober's Review*, p. 21. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, pp. 35-38.

136. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes - 1819*, p. 36.

137. Philip to Solomon, 5 May 1818, UVA, 8653-i, Box 2, 1814-1818.

138. *Luther*, pp. 173-174.

The congregations in South Carolina, largely through the efforts of Charleston's Rev. John Bachman, had raised \$246.75 towards the effort, and there were profits yet to be realized from the sales of *Luther*, of which Philip Henkel still had most of his 500 copies. After the 1817 Synod had praised this school and successfully solicited money or subscriptions from its own congregations, the rules were changed: "that we could not have anything to do with the school until a constitution had been adopted by it," with sanction of Synod. If Philip Henkel and Joseph Bell would present an acceptable constitution to a Synod committee, and allow the school to be under the "supervision or direction" of Synod, temporary funds could be released. The Secretary was directed to advise the school that Synod would support the endeavor in "accord with the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran and Reformed Church."¹³⁹ Who directed the secretary to send this letter? Certainly not the Synod, as they had not met between 1817 and 1819. Who was behind the reluctance of this endorsement a year later? The person who wrote the objections to turning over the money to the seminary was Secretary/Treasurer of the North Carolina Synod -- Gottlieb Schober.

David Henkel attended the early Synod meeting, voted in its early actions, and was prepared to participate and be ordained in accordance with *Luther*. Quite the opposite was to happen!

"Dutch Presbyterian" layman Andrew Hoyl, from Lincoln County, was present at the meeting, and was allowed the floor with the purpose of preferring charges against David Henkel. Hoyl was well aware that David Henkel's sermons were aggressive towards those of other Protestant beliefs, and he had been regularly documenting Henkel's doctrinal confrontations and some of his civil affairs for several years. Hoyl had six very prominent brothers, two of whom were non-Lutheran ministers. His first cousin, Peter, was David Henkel's father-in-law, and was commonly known as "Politician Peter," as he was elected to the North Carolina House of Commons from 1802 to 1817 with a two year exception, was elected to the Senate in 1819, and later became a Judge in Lincoln County. Peter Hoyl often had represented the Lutherans at School House Church as a delegate to Synod meetings. However, "Rich Andrew" Hoyl, as he was commonly known, was financially the most successful, and his estate of \$200,000 in cash was the largest individual estate ever administered by the Gaston County Courts upon his death. Andrew Hoyl later financed and built the first Presbyterian Church in Dallas, N. C.. Andrew was also politically inclined, as he served in the State Senate in the years 1807-1809. During the 1808 State Senate session, Andrew Hoyl represented Lincoln County, while Gottlieb Schober was a Stokes County Senator, and cousin Peter was in the House of Commons -- three of the few German-descent State legislators at that time.¹⁴⁰

Andrew Hoyl was involved in the events of a legal matter between Susannah Williams and David Linebarger. Williams, represented by Adam Costner, had sued Linebarger for marriage due to birth of an illegitimate child. Linebarger and David Henkel went to Costner's house, whereupon the opposing parties "began to dispute with each other." In order to compromise, Henkel suggested that Linebarger pay Costner one hundred dollars in settlement, rather than pursue the matter in court. To encourage this, Henkel said he'd rather pay the ten or fifteen dollars in court costs himself, in order to end the matter. Later, Costner informed Henkel that Linebarger had agreed to the offer, and Henkel then related Costner's information to others. Several months passed, and Henkel was summoned to testify in court to relate these incidents. He found it burdensome to attend court on the appointed date, and, with consent of both parties, was allowed to enter a deposition with Justice of the Peace, Andrew Hoyl. When asked whether Linebarger made the \$100.00 offer, Henkel said he did not recollect for sure. Upon closing the deposition, Hoyl asked Henkel whether he had discussed this "offer" with neighbors, and Henkel replied, "not that he knew of." Indeed, Henkel had related the offer to John Hovis, based on Adam Costner's account. When several neighbors were approached, they insisted that Henkel had related Linebarger's offer to them. Henkel approached Justice Hoyl and "acknowledged that he had answered one particular question in the aforesaid oath wrong; that he had forgot at that time, and thought he had sworn the truth."¹⁴¹

Word of Henkel's attempt at clarification to the oath became known in his Churches. In March of 1818, Henkel read a portion of a letter to the congregation at Costner's, which seemed to prove himself innocent of

139. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, transl., pp. 37-38. Emphasis added. Any financial support of this school by the Reformed Church is unknown.

140. Rucker, pp. 44-46, 58-59. *NC Synod Minutes*, transl., 1811, 1817. John L. Cheney, Jr., Ed., *North Carolina Government, 1585-1979: A Narrative and Statistical History*, N. C. Department of Secretary of State, Thad Eure, Sec., (Raleigh: 1981), pp. 253, 254, 255.

141. Andrew Hoyl, "To the Editor of the Raleigh Star," *The Star, and North-Carolina State Gazette*, Friday, May 19, 1820, N. C. Archives microfilm Ra NCSw-2, no page numbers. John Hovis, A Description of David Henkel's Oath before Andrew Hoyl, 6 November 1819, copy obtained from The Handley Library, Winchester, VA. Hovis's certificate was confirmed by John Hufman.

perjury. Hoyl was absent, but soon challenged Henkel to furnish this letter to the "ensuing Court," or to the next meeting at Costner's.¹⁴²

Henkel had obtained a statement from Susannah Singleton (formerly Williams), as follows:

When the question was ast you whithe[r] you had not told the tail another way your answer was not to your knowledg[e]. A Hoyl told you to make Shore Wark. your answer was you had many things to Steady that you Would See aBout it.¹⁴³

A month before the Synod meeting, Hoyl wrote a lengthy letter to a potential Henkel congregation.

If you knew him as well as I do, I know you would not be lead by him from the genuine way of serving our god [sic], by a true & living faith in Christ Jesus, who is able to communicate his holy [sic] Spirit to his people without the laying on of Henkles hands and believing him to be so far from being a Christian or true Minister of the gospel, I think it must offend the Lord if we put our trust in Man. . . I only wish you would wate [sic] until an other minister comes & not let this provd [sic] selfish strainger [sic] have the satisfaction of thus hurting the feelings of your Prispeterian [sic] Breathren [sic]. . . . You know he insults all other denominations. . . . We had the Scripture before he came here.¹⁴⁴

On the Monday of Holy Week, three weeks prior to Synod, Andrew Hoyl made a sworn statement to Lincoln County Justice, Isaac Holland, where he related the details of Henkel's deposition. Holland summoned seven witnesses to appear before a Justice and make sworn statements relative to the case.¹⁴⁵

Henkel was made aware of some of Hoyl's activities and believed that Hoyl was trying to break up the Lutheran Church. On Maundy Thursday, Henkel discussed this matter with Jacob and Elisabeth Wike, members of St. Paul's. The Good Friday service was to be Henkel's last regular appointment at St. Paul's, as he had been dismissed as their pastor, based on what he felt were Hoyl's "false reports." He mentioned to the Wikes that he had contacted an attorney, might sue Hoyl for \$2,000, and would include John Wilfong (Hoyl's brother-in-law), and Polly Fulenwider in the suit. He felt that winning the suit, plus a publication against Hoyl, would make Hoyl look as black as the Wikes' chimney wall. Henkel also related the gossip that Hoyl planned to publish an admission to having made libelous statements about him. The Wikes found this hard to believe, and warned Henkel to be aware of Andrew Hoyl's influence, and "told him that A. Hoyl was so much respected in this quarter that nearly all would be disposed to believe anything he said. That he Hoyl was allway [sic] call [sic] & held as an uncommon good man." At the following day's service, Henkel repeated some of these statements to Elders Jacob Lutz and Gaspar Bolch, as well as to the entire St. Paul's congregation.¹⁴⁶

On the following Easter Monday, Henkel was at Costner's Church. Believing that charges were to be presented against him at the upcoming Synod, he was attempting to gather certificates defending his doctrinal positions. Andrew Hoyl was present, and said he had no intentions of attending Synod, and "pointedly declared" that he had no charges against Henkel, in presence of several witnesses. Hoyl claimed that he did not believe it would be a fair trial, as he was not a member of the Lutheran Church. If Hoyl later decided to make accusations, he agreed to notify Henkel beforehand. Yet for the next two weeks, and possibly after hearing about Henkel's

142. Letter from Andrew Hoyl to David Henkel, 1 April 1818. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

143. Susannah Singleton Certificate, undated. This is spelled and capitalized as seen, with punctuation added. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

144. Letter from Andrew Hoyl, 20 March 1819, recipient not known, but is possibly St. Paul's, as Henkel preached there only once more. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

145. David Hinkle Papers, Southern Historical Collection, UNC Library, Chapel Hill, NC. The order from Holland was dated April 5, 1819, and most of the depositions were dated April 7, 1819.

146. Certificate from Jacob and Elisabeth Wike, 15 April 1819; Certificate from Elders of St. Paul's, no date; David Hinkle Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina. Punctuation was added for clarity and spellings are as seen. These were also published in *Shober's Review*. The name "Mary Fulenwider" (Andrew Hoyl's daughter) appears in John Oat's Testimony as having accused Henkel of swearing a lie; no date, copy from The Handley Library, Gettysburg, VA. The name "Polly" is on the Wike Certificate. RCC: Anne W. McAllister notes that Elizabeth Wike was the niece of Andrew Hoyl through his wife Catherine Wilfong Hoyl. Apparently, David Henkel did not know the family relationship when he made statements against Andrew Hoyl.

threat of legal charges at the Wikes' house. "Rich" Andrew continued diligently to gather written evidence against David Henkel, and in preparation for his own vindication in court, should it be required.¹⁴⁷

After this Hoyl and Henkel meeting Andrew Hoyl sent Adam Costner to Rev. Storch's home with the request for Hoyl and Costner to appear before the North Carolina Synod in order to bring charges against David. Storch gave them permission, and Hoyl continued to prepare depositions. In fact of the 44 depositions which Hoyl solicited only 9 were taken prior to the Hoyl-Henkel meeting of April 12, Easter Monday!¹⁴⁸

Also sometime during April, St. John's member Frederick Hoke asked fellow-Justice Andrew Hoyl about Henkel's alleged false oath. Andrew Hoyl denied he'd accused Henkel thusly, but stated "if I had sworn [sic] what he swore I should think that I had sworn a lie."¹⁴⁹

Basically, Hoyl and Henkel had accused each other of lying relative to the legal case. Both thought they were right, and that they had been unnecessarily wronged by the other, which makes for a good fight. Not included in Hoyl's documentation of the case to Synod was Henkel's actual sworn deposition, without which, the discussion of its contents was largely reduced to Hoyl's word, and third-party statements, against Henkel's.¹⁵⁰

But at length, the Rev. Mr. Moser [sic] and several of Henkel's elders insisted so hard to know what he had sworn, and I [Hoyl] at last related it to them as it was . . .¹⁵¹

At the Synod meeting, Henkel was caught off-guard, had not been made aware of all the allegations, did not know the contents of all the certificates, and could not possibly have been prepared to defend himself against them. President Storch asked Henkel and Hoyl if they would agree to a majority vote on the various issues. Hoyl agreed, but Henkel said "I will, if Hoyle has no charges that I know nothing of; but if he has I will not." Henkel was promised a separate "trial" if new accusations were made, particularly those relating to doctrinal matters.¹⁵²

Both Hoyl and Adam Costner were present, and Hoyl presented a memorial including several allegations, along with the written evidence regarding the legal matter.¹⁵³ Hoyl further asserted to Synod that Henkel had threatened to file a defamation suit against him, contending that "he certainly could recover in consequence of said false reports."¹⁵⁴

Finally, Hoyl, the "humble memorialist," was "therefore compelled to charge said David Henkel with being a rash man, and with having taken very unfair advantage to rob me of my reputation . . ."¹⁵⁵

Under such circumstances, a Synodical trial can be decidedly one-sided. While Henkel was under synodical auspices or jurisdiction, Dutch Presbyterian Hoyl was not; therefore, there was no arena for Henkel to level any

147. Sketch of David Henkel's trial at Buffalo Creek on the 26th & 27th of April, 1819, hereinafter referenced David Henkel Trial, copies obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Answers to Andrew Hoyle's Publication against the Reverend David Henkel by a committee of investigation, July 20, 1820, trans., C. L. Coon Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. John Huffman, Peter Rhyne, Adam Cloninger, Michael Rhyne, Jacob Plonk, Solomon Tothearu, Jese Elmore, Certificate, dated 10 October 1819, copy from The Handley Library, Winchester, VA.

148. Adam Cloninger, Certificate Against Hoyl and Costner, 16 Oct 1819, Jacob Costner, Certificate Against Hoyl and Costner, 16 Oct 1819, The Handley Library, Winchester, VA.

149. Fr'd Hoke Certificate, 6 November 1819, copy from The Handley Library, Winchester, VA.

150. The various certificates are located in the David Hinkle Papers at the University of North Carolina, and were later published in *Schober's Review*. As Henkel's deposition was filed in a legal matter, it (or a certified copy) should have been available to Moser, the Elders, and to the Synod. If it would have served to discredit Henkel, it would certainly have been published in *Schober's Review*.

151. *Schober's Review*, p. 50. It cannot be determined that anyone else ever saw this deposition.

152. David Henkel Trial; Harkey Certificate, cited above. Daniel Moser Certificate, in English, dated 9 October 1819, copy from The Handley Library, Gettysburg, VA, and hereinafter referenced Daniel Moser Certificate, 1819. A German certificate from Moser (believed to be the original) is translated to say essentially the same. Both certificates include statements by others, with a variety of signatures.

153. *Schober's Review*, p. 49, cited from Memorial of Andrew Hoyl, of N. C. Lincoln, to the pious and reverend Lutheran Clergy, at conference, now in session in Cabarrus county, N. C. at the Yellow Meeting House, dated April 24, 1819. The terms "German Reformed" and "Dutch Presbyterian" were used interchangeably during this era, yet Hoyl was also in connection with "English Presbyterian" pastors. RCC: He is credited with founding the Dallas Presbyterian Church. All German Reformed in Gaston County either joined the Lutheran, Presbyterian, or another church body by the Civil War.

154. *The Star*, Hoyl's Letter. Wike Certificate from David Hinkle Papers, UNC.

155. *Schober's Review*, p. 51, cited from Hoyle memorial above.

counter-charges against Hoyl. Furthermore, Henkel's delegates could offer little assistance in civil affairs in which they were not personally involved.

The second group of complaints was principally of not promoting good church relations with other denominations. Hoyl's petition stated his religious affiliation as "Dutch Presbyterian," but that he had attended a Lutheran Church, as though he were "in full communion with them. . . . There existed no dispute between the Lutherans and Presbyterians until said Henkel came to bear rule amongst us." He used Henkel's statement against inter-marriage between faiths as a prime example of Henkel's attitude.¹⁵⁶

The third group was an outgrowth in the second, and detailed the doctrinal difference between Henkel's teachings and that of other denominations. It was presented that Henkel had criticized Presbyterian Pastor Humphrey Hunter, since Hunter did not "lay on of hands" at time of receiving new members. When Pastor Hall's version of Henkel's doctrine on the Lord's Supper was presented, Henkel and his delegates "denied the assertions to be true." Henkel requested that Schober read the letter he'd submitted on the subject, "which would speak for itself." Schober refused, and the three senior pastors sided with the respected Pastor Hall, rather than Henkel's delegates.¹⁵⁷

Henkel was also accused of encouraging baptism without faith in Christ. This was a charge initiated by Adam Costner, relating his account of a private conversation. Henkel's delegates again denied that he preached this sort of doctrine. Costner, the same man who represented Susanna Williams in the legal case, was also present to defend his own excommunication, which had been adopted by a unanimous vote of Costner's Congregation on March 20. Senior Elder Jacob Rhyne had previously visited Costner for admonishment, after charges were entered that Costner "abused the congregation." When brought to "church trial," Costner was asked whether he would acquiesce to the congregation and its preacher, and "amend his conduct," whereupon he began to abuse Henkel. A certificate was signed by over 15 men of the Church attesting to the excommunication, while church custom suggested twelve. Schober believed that Costner's trial was manipulated by Henkel, in order to prevent him from appearing as a witness. When J. Fullenwider presented a petition that Costner was "a good man" as sole evidence of his innocence, the Synod leaders, "without consent of conference restored him again to full communion," and without questioning the other signatories, or allowing the issue to remain congregational business. However, the members of Costner's Church did not reinstate Adam Costner into communion, as they believed "his conduct is known too well."¹⁵⁸

The proposals for the meeting house at Long Creek and Beaver Dam were presented as evidence of some of Henkel's uncompromising doctrinal positions. In this document, one of the provisions was that "the manhood of Christ was taken up into his godhead: that therefore he had obtained all divine perfection." Henkel defended it as "the doctrine of the Bible." President Storch disagreed with this doctrine, and "that if 500 Bibles said so, he still would not believe it."¹⁵⁹

Other charges included that Henkel claimed "he was equal to God" and could forgive sins, and that he taught the Catholic doctrine of "transubstantiation" in Holy Communion. Other minor items were also presented

156. Many Documents included in David Hinkle Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina. *Schober's Review*, pp. 49-57.

157. David Henkel Trial. *Schober's Review*, pp. 49-57.

158. David Henkel Trial. *Schober's Review*, pp. 19-20. John Huffman, Peter Rhyne, Jacob Plonk, Solomon Tothearow, Jese Elmore, Adam Cloninger, Michael Rhyne, John Elmore, Jacob Costner, Michal Costner, Jacob Costner, Jr, Certificate Against Adam Costner, 16 October 1819; Adam Cloninger, Certificate Against Hoyl and Costner, 16 October 1819; Jacob Costner, Certificate Against Hoyl and Costner, 16 October 1819; Daniel Moser Certificate, cited above; copies from The Handley Library, Winchester, VA. J. Fullenwider was most likely John Fullenwider, iron-master, who owned the High Shoals Foundry. He was a very wealthy and influential man. Andrew Hoyl owned interest in Fullenwider's operations.

159. Daniel Moser Certificate, 1819, English and German versions are nearly identical in content. Schober later reduced the number of Bibles President Storch referenced to one hundred, and claimed that this statement was taken out of context by Henkel. Storch's letter to Schober, dated June 15, 1821 states: "I was in a kind of friendly conversation that I made this expression, and the idea appeared to abound, that I hapily [‘hastily’] expressed the words I won't believe it etc.---" Harkey Certificate. Many signatories remember Storch making this comment at the Synod meeting also.

to Synod, including a misunderstanding about the date of one of Philip Henkel's appointments at Costner's, which David altered; thereby, placing David and his brother at odds, with Andrew Hoyl's knowledge.¹⁶⁰

As new charges had been leveled against Henkel, he asked for a new "trial," which was refused. Henkel asserted that when he attempted to defend himself, he and his friends were silenced.¹⁶¹

Amid the charges, the doctrinal differences between Schober and Henkel on the subject of Holy Communion became paramount. Henkel accused certain Pastors of "denying the doctrine of the Lutheran church, with respect to the Lord's Supper." The issue was "whether the real body of Christ, which was crucified, and his real blood, are present in the Lord's Supper, and administered not only to believers, but also to unbelievers?" He presented his argument using the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.¹⁶²

After Storch "earnestly solicited" Henkel to make peace, he conceded the events surrounding the sworn deposition, and promised that he would never deny them again. If Hoyl had never claimed that Henkel swore falsely on the deposition, Henkel admitted that he acted too harshly, and agreed to apologize. He requested the pardon of Andrew Hoyl, and it was granted "on condition that he would do better in future." Henkel interpreted this to mean that he could not preach on "any disputed subject." A later transcription of the Synod Minutes stated, that "he would conduct himself in a friendly and fraternal manner towards ministers of other denominations (the opposite had been proven against him.)." Upon later advice from his Elders, Henkel did not pursue the defamation suit against Hoyl.¹⁶³

Since Henkel conditionally acknowledged his guilt in the Hoyl case, the Synod concurred, and in accordance with the ordination provisions of 1815, Henkel's "Candidate" status was reduced to that of "Catechist" for the following year. When Synod was "threatened by his adherents with the consequences," a compromise was reached. Henkel would be restored to Candidate status after six months if he could furnish to the President written documentation of peace within his congregations -- "especially no serious complaints be presented by Presbyterian preachers and brethren." Schober originally made the motion that Henkel be "silenced" for one year, but truly believed that the Synod "ought to have dismissed him forever. . . . This we did not do, out of compassion."¹⁶⁴ Schober later expressed his disgust:

And you [Henkel] know that you would not have obtained this [catechist license], if we had not received your open disavowal and denial (and we winked at this for peace sake, for it was proven) of having preached doctrines of the most disgraceful kind, and your assertion that you never believed such, and would never preach them.¹⁶⁵

The North Carolina Synod Minutes state that Henkel was "satisfied with the decision."¹⁶⁶

Where was Lincoln County's other Lutheran Candidate, Daniel Moser, during this ordeal? He was ordained, as previously agreed, on April 28, but the area west of the Catawba did not finally have an ordained Lutheran Pastor after five years of petitioning the Synod. Moser was only ordained to the new office of "Deacon!"¹⁶⁷ Moser was placed in an uncomfortable position during the Henkel discussions, as he was also seeking full ordination. Direct and forceful confrontation with Synod leaders could have placed his own advancement in jeopardy. Some years later, Moser wrote:

160. David Henkel Trial. David Hinkle Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Letter from Andrew Hoyl to David Henkel, dated April 1st, 1818, copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Daniel Moser Certificate, 1819.

161. David Henkel Trial. Harkey Certificate, cited above. Daniel Moser Certificate, 1819.

162. *Carollian Herald*, pp. 40-41, 46. *Schober's Review*, p. 46.

163. *The Star*, Hoyl's Letter. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 39. David Henkel Trial. *Schober's Review*, p. 40. Harkey Certificate.

164. *Schober's Review*, p. 29. David Henkel Notebook. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 39. Bernheim & Cox, p. 45.

165. *Schober's Review*, p. 20.

166. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 39. The NC Synod Minutes of 1819 were written and published several months after the meeting, as they mention later events, and begin attacking David Henkel: "But here Satan began his division among us, for David did not conduct himself as a Christian, . . ." (Peschau, pp. 39-40).

167. *NC Synod Minutes*, 1819, p. 12.

... I was one of the members sitting on his trial.-- Although the majority declared him guilty, yet I protested against their verdict, because the charges in my view were not authenticated by legal testimonies: moreover the trial was partial, unlawful and tyrannical.168

To meet the originally-advertised intent of the "untimely" meeting, Schober was selected as the delegate from North Carolina, and became the only "guest" at what was actually the regular meeting of the Pennsylvania Synod, with the purpose of discussing a General Synod organization.169

David Henkel was surely humbled by the experience of the 1819 Synod Meeting, as he mailed a letter to Schober, dated May 6, 1819, stating that, "It is agreed upon that the next conference be held in Immanuel's [sic] Church Lincolnton in the Rev. Mr. Moser's congregation."170 Others of the Henkel family, who were absent from the meeting, had similar responses. In a letter of May 17, 1819, from David Henkel's brother, Solomon:

... That you have reduced him in office is right, if it only brings him to more humility; but I fear his pride will not admit of it. . . . My mother says the Synod did a father's part to him: now she believes you love David, and act with him according to right. . . . My father does not sanction it [at] all that Philip proceeds thus. . . .171

Father Paul also communicated with Schober regarding David's ordination decision:

The information respecting David and his conduct, it is true, is disagreeable; but the remedy applied to him may be good. It is a pity that he misuses his talents; but I could never bring him to think and act otherwise.172

David Henkel publicly stated a reaction to the charges presented by Hoyl, "I positively declare, . . . that I entertain no private animosity [sic] against this person, nor do I wish that any of my friends should." But Henkel also remembered how Hoyl had "assailed" him again, the day following the hearing.173

Yet when the Synod Minutes were published several months later, Secretary Schober seized this editorial opportunity to describe an unnamed pastor:

... some teach according to their own spirit and will, and do not permit the spirit of meekness, love, tenderness, mercy and patience to reign; but suffer the spirit of distrust, jealousy, wrangling, disrupting, and disposition to domineer . . .174

The contrast of the two key personalities is dramatic. Schober was a 63-year-old elder statesman, civic leader, attorney, businessman, entrepreneur, and Synod officer. Henkel was a youthful, brash, enthusiastic, and combative individual, whose livelihood was principally, if not completely, derived from a pastor's limited compensation. Where Schober believed in a universal Christian church, Henkel felt that the denominations were as different as "cows and horses." While Schober invited pastors of other beliefs into his churches, Henkel tried to discourage such practice in his own pulpits and in churches yet to be built. Henkel believed in the traditional Lutheran doctrine of the presence of Christ in the sacramental elements. Schober sided with Storch's opinion, and his five hundred Bibles. The few similarities between Schober and Henkel only served to aggravate their differences, as both were uncompromising in their positions, and both were well equipped with sharp minds, sharp tongues, and pens as sharp as daggers.

Dr. Jerry Surratt, biographer of Gottlieb Schober, described Schober's domineering personality:

A fiery disposition which was tolerated as youthful enthusiasm in early years became less welcome as a young adult. Schober seemed bound to antagonize others even when trying his best to serve them and the community honestly and creatively. . . . He could be

168. Certificate from Daniel Moser to the Evangelical Lutheran Brethren in Kentucky, dated April 17, 1825. Copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

169. Bernheim, pp. 436-439.

170. David to G. Schober, 6 May 1819, MESDA.

171. *Schober's Review*, pp. 35-36, cited from letter from Solomon Henkel to Schober, dated May 17, 1819. Original letter not located.

172. *Ibid.*, p. 35, cited from a letter from Paul Henkel to Schober, dated May 26, 1819. Original letter not located.

173. *Carollian Herald*, p. 27. David Henkel Trial.

174. *NC Synod Minutes*, 1819, p. 21.

headstrong and totally unwilling to compromise on matters of practice as well as principle. Bitrolic language and pure character assassination were his tools for persuasion of the recalcitrant, especially if he felt wronged.¹⁷⁵

Schober once described himself: "I was headstrong and where I believed I was right to be, I did not yield regardless of the consequences."¹⁷⁶

Paul Henkel once phrased his son as "hot-headed David," and wrote the following description in his often-allegorical style:

David, (if he rides his own horse and saddle,) it is good that his horse dare not go where he pleaseth, but is guided by another; he might otherwise turn it to Scotland, and try to ford the seas and both be drowned.¹⁷⁷

THE OAK TREE ORDINATION

The apparent resignation by some of the Henkels to the results of the Synod meeting was short-lived, as they did not include the sentiments of Philip nor the Lincoln congregations. Philadelphia (formerly Costner's) and White Haven congregations sent a messenger to brother Philip in Tennessee. The White Haven congregation felt "aggrieved" by the Synod's decisions regarding Henkel. Word reached Hoyl that Philip was told "the old clergy had dealt harshly" with David, "and had refused to ordain him, as per a former agreement." The Synod's 1817 meeting had set the date for the next meeting as Trinity Sunday, which fell on June 6th of 1819. Philip Henkel had never been satisfied with the "untimely Synod," and was even more displeased with the actions "of a few narrow hearted Despots," who had also withheld the funds promised for Union Seminary, subject to their authority, and pending the adoption of a compromising constitution. Philip Henkel was now preparing to challenge the constitutionality of the April meeting with the fanfare that might as well include an ordination or two.¹⁷⁸

What did St. John's think about the sequence of events that reduced their pastor from Candidate to Catechist? Henkel's followers at St. John's were not pleased, and arose to his defense. St. John's had not elected a delegate to the early Synod meeting, nor did they attend in 1817.

Philip sent out a notice for a Synod meeting at the regularly-scheduled date (while Schober was conveniently absent, as he was at the General Synod discussions in Baltimore). A small congregation assembled at Buffalo Creek Church with express purposes of holding a constitutional Synod meeting. Pastors present were Philip Henkel and Daniel Moser; Candidates and Catechists included Joseph E. Bell and David Henkel; and delegates were as follows:

St. John's: Frederick Hoke, Esq.
School-House: Daniel Lutz, Esq. and Peter Hoyl ("Politician Peter")
White Haven: Jacob Forney
Long Creek: Isaac Mauney
Philadelphia: George Howis and Adam Kloninger
Also David Thronberg was admitted as a friend.¹⁷⁹

This impressive list of delegates is very important: Peter Hoyl, the 1819 State Senator from Lincoln County; Hoke and Lutz. Justices in the Lincoln County Courts; Jacob Forney, owner of an iron business in eastern Lincoln County; and other highly-respected and very influential citizens. All were strong leaders in their congregations. This was not an unimportant assembly of men from Lincoln County!; but men of respect and admiration -- men with considerable influence within their communities. Their intentions seem very clear, and their defiance against

175. Surratt, p. 2.

176. *Ibid.*, p. 17. Surratt, p. 17, cited from Schober's Memoirs, is the source of Schober's own description.

177. *Schober's Review*, p. 35, cited from letters from Paul Henkel to Gottlieb Schober, dated December 4, 1817 and January 5, 1818.

178. *The Star*, Hoyl's letter. Letter from Philip Henkel to David Henkel, dated 15 April 1819, copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. *N. C. Synod Minutes - 1819*, p. 10. David Henkel Trial includes a letter from White Haven, dated 15 May 1819, and signed by six persons.

179. *Carolinian Herald*, p. 20. Many accounts do not mention Daniel Moser's presence, and apparently he did not participate in the proceedings.

prior actions of the North Carolina Synod meeting is apparent. Were they being led by David Henkel? Or was David Henkel being led by them? Could David Henkel have influenced these intelligent men so strongly? Not very likely!

Normal services were held on Sunday, and Church Elder Ritchie and Peter Hoyl were sent to President Storch's house about two miles from the church, with a written message signed by all present, requesting that Storch attend the meeting. "It was said that Rev. Storck [sic] was very sick." Storch's response was, "I am indisposed [sic]; and if I were not indisposed [sic], I would not attend; for conference is over, and there is none now depending!" Storch also instructed Mr. Ritchey "that he should not open the meeting house doors."¹⁸⁰

Eventually, religious services were permitted in the church, but synodical activities were prohibited. The meeting re-convened at 9:00 A. M. on Monday. Joseph E. Bell preached a sermon, followed by Henkel's sermon on "the antichrist," which Schober later described as "a very inflammatory sermon against the old ministers, trying to influence the hearers to rage against them." When banned from the church, Schober's contemporary account of this event stated: "They went under the trees, and Philip ordained his brother David and Bell." Later, Schober cites that the crowd was about to break up and disperse, "then David jumped up in a rage from the log he was sitting on, and bawled out, 'Then I will be none of your preachers.'" Henkel's account was, "After preaching, we retired to the shade of the trees, near the church, where, with singing and praying, we opened Synod."¹⁸¹

Philip Henkel was elected President, and Joseph E. Bell, Secretary. The absence of two Tennessee pastors, Zink and Miller, were excused. As for the remainder of the absent pastors, "The Synod regrets the inexcusable absence of so many members, requesting them to conform for the future to the constitution of the church." The actions of the previous synod meeting were considered unconstitutional, as that meeting was not held on the date prescribed in accordance with the resolution of 1817, as published in *Luther*.¹⁸² Daniel Moser was apparently silent during these proceedings.

A total of seven petitions for ordination was presented, four for Joseph E. Bell, and three for David Henkel.¹⁸³ St. John's was prominent at this meeting, and Hoke presented the following petition for Henkel's ordination:

Lincoln County, June 2d 1819

A Memorial

We the members of St. Johns Church have met as a council in behalf of the whole congregation by agreement, do hereby authorise [sic] and appoint our trusty friend Mr. Fredrick Hoke, Esq. as Deputy to represent said Congregation at the Constitutional Conference to be held on Trinity Sunday 1819 on Buffalow Creek. We are sorry to hear of the desitions [sic: 'decisions?'] which took place between the Rev'd David Henkel & Mr. Andrew Hoyle Esq. We are well convinced that the Rev'd Henkel has been falsely accused. We beg of you to recall such desitions [sic 'decisions?'] & to replace him as he was before however we will be satisfied with whatever our deputy will agree to. We are all satisfied and so are the people in many other congregations with the Rev'd Henkel's conduct as a Christian & zealous preacher & if

180. *Ibid.*, p. 21. Peter Hoyle, Certificate, copy from The Handley Library, Winchester, VA.

181. Schober to Solomon, 20 July 1819, MESDA, is the source for the calm statement. Schober was in Baltimore, and his informant was revealed in this letter as Daniel Moser. *Schober's Review*, p. 25, is the source of the inflammatory account. *Caroliman Herald*, p. 21, is the source of Henkel's account. P. Anstadt's, *Life and Times of Rev. S. S. Schmucker, D. D.*, states on page 159: "It is reported that the above named oak tree died the next year after the ordination had been performed. Some superstitious people then attributed its death to some baneful influence which proceeded from this irregular performance. The tree was then cut down and sawed up into small pieces, which were widely distributed as relics. The writer [Anstadt] saw one of these relics in the Historical Library at Gettysburg. It is a small block of wood about four inches long and two inches wide, smoothly planed, having a label pasted on one side. On this label is written, said to be in the handwriting of Prof. H. E. Jacobs, the following statement: 'From the tree near Concord, N. C., beneath which David Henkel was ordained in 1819 (Trinity Sunday), and the rupture with the North Carolina Synod effected, leading to the formation of the Tennessee Synod. From Rev. S. L. Keller, Concord, N. C.'" Schmucker was supportive of the General Synod.

182. *Caroliman Herald*, p. 22. The failure to excuse the absent pastors was certainly in response to the earlier Synod meeting, wherein the Tennessee pastors were not excused.

183. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

the conference did degrade & in a manner forsake him, as we are fully resolved not to let in conscience suffer unjustly. All we desire is that you may act justly on this memorial. God be with you and us. Amen.

(Signed)

John Eisenhauer

John Holler

John Stine

Barnhardt Sigman

Peter Little, Esq.

Michel Hefner

John Smith

George Sigman

Peter Hoke

Jacob Fullbright

John Moser

Fridrick Hoke, Sen.

Henry Stine

Eaphram Christopher

Daniel Hoke, Jun.

William Sigman

Daniel Stine

Andrew Fullbright

Lewis Haeffer

Daniel Sammet

Andrew Schuck

George Yount

Anthony Moose

John Yount

Jacob Stine

John Hefner

David Eisenhauer

Andrew Yount

Fredrick Schuck

John Hoke, Jun.

Philip Eisenhauer

A true copy of the original

William Sigman

Philip Henkel¹⁸⁴

This petition provides another glimpse as to the leaders of St. John's, and events that followed agitated a more complete membership list.

Similar "memorials" were submitted by Philadelphia (formerly Costner's) and School-House Churches on behalf of David Henkel's ordination, with suggestions that one or more of the churches may break away from Synod if the ordination was not performed. The delegates, including Hoke, "all prayed unanimously that the Rev. David Henkel be advanced; stating that he was a zealous preacher of the gospel, a good citizen, and a moral and well-informed man; and that the complaints heretofore laid against him, were founded in prejudice" Also ordained was Joseph E. Bell, secretary of this Synod meeting.¹⁸⁵

184. Memorial from St. John's Church to N. C. Synod, June 2, 1819, copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Gettysburg Seminary. A transcribed copy, with a few minor errors, is also in the C. L. Coon Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. A previous historian, when referring to this meeting, stated, "Charges against Henkel were apparently ignored." NOT BY ST. JOHN'S!

185. Petition from School House Church to N. C. Synod, June 4, 1819, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. *Carolinian*

The hand-written David Henkel ordination certificate exists for our edification, and reads as follows:

NOMINE JESU. AMEN.

We the officers of the Evangelical Lutheran German and English Synod of North Carolina and adjacent States, do hereby certify and declare that the Reverend David Henkel, who has been heretofore ordained a Deacon, according to the canons of said Synod, was this day ordained a Bishop (commonly called a Pastor) of their Christian Church. Having previously given sufficient evidency of his qualifications for said office, as stated in the 3rd Chapter of Paul's first Epistle to Timothy. The ordination was performed by the laying on of hands and prayer; agreeable to a rule, passed [sic] Synod, in October, 1817. See Luther, page 175. In testimony whereof we hereunto set our names: This 7th day of June 1819.

Jos. E. Bell
Philip Henkel
Secretary of the Synod
President of the Synod 186

Those present defended these ordinations as constitutional and according to the rules published in *Luther*, where the language stated "Trinity." The opponents later stated that the word "Trinity" was not a part of the previous Synod resolution, and that the time for ordination had been left blank on the original publication. Rev. Jacob Stirewalt's personal copy of *Luther*, as personally examined by this author, is strong evidence of post-publication alteration of at least some copies of this pamphlet, as a tiny patch of matching paper is glued over the word "Trinity".¹⁸⁷ Those notably absent, referred to the meeting as a "farce," and did not recognize its legality.

When later called to account for his actions, Philip believed the ordinations were entirely legitimate, and that he was justified in performing them:

I considered myself in duty bound to ordain them: 1st, because that time was the legal time for holding the Synod, and I believed in concurrence with the other members to have had a right to transact business; 2d, because there were petitions presented from respectable congregations praying for the ordination of the aforesaid persons; & because it was positively insisted upon by all the deputies present; and lastly, because in compliance with the following resolution adopted at the session in 1817: to wit 'Every candidate and deacon, is bound to produce at each Synod, one or more theological treatises of his own composition, in writing, according to which they will be examined; and according to their industry they are to be advanced,' &c; See Luther book page 172, I considered myself under obligation to perform said ordinations: inasmuch as the aforesaid persons had produced their theological treatises, which were satisfactory, &c. 188

THE SEPARATION

When Schober returned from Baltimore with the promising prospects of a General Synod, he was advised by Storch and Moser of the events of Trinity Monday. Rather than union, he believed that division had already occurred within his own Synod, and that the ordinations were symbolic of this separation. He appealed to Paul Henkel to intercede, but feared it was too late. When he recounted the Trinity meeting to Solomon, he stated, "They have now separated themselves from us, and no ministry could recognize them, if David and Bell are allowed to perform the Sacraments legitimately." Schober felt the General Synod was the ultimate antidote to prevent "such mischief."¹⁸⁹

Soon after the ordinations, Philip, Joseph E. Bell, and Peter Hoyl visited Pastor Miller. In confidence, Miller showed Bell a letter from Schober, which stated, "Let us break off from them." The idea of organizing a

Herald, p. 21-22. Henkel, p. 21.

186. David Henkel Ordination Certificate, Henkel Family Papers, C. L. Coon Collection, Perkins Library, Duke University.

187. Henkel, pp. 17-18. *Luther*, Jacob Stirewalt's copy, p. 175, displays the patch of paper over Trinity. Jacob Stirewalt was from Rowan County.

A second altered copy is at Region 9, James R. Crumley Archives, Lineberger Memorial Library, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. Six copies have been seen without alteration, and two, altered, suggesting that many were distributed prior to alteration.

188. Philip Henkel Deposition, 11 Sep 1829, NC Archives, NC Supreme Court file 1531. This was a sworn deposition UNDER OATH!

189. Schober to Solomon, 20 July 1819, MESDA.

separate Synod was contemplated by the Henkel party also, yet not accepted by all who were present on Trinity. Ordinations were normally performed by two or more pastors, yet Synod leaders seemed content with the ordination of Joseph E. Bell without the addition of a second pastor's signature, but not that of David Henkel. Both sides were writing letters and posturing for their positions.¹⁹⁰

When David Henkel began serving his congregations after his ordination, Schober sent out an advertisement of Synodical denouncement. It stated that "David Hinkle [sic] is not at this time authorized to administer the Lords [sic] Supper," and Schober made it clear that Henkel was never an ordained minister of the North Carolina Synod. When the Synod Minutes were published by July or August, they included comments that by virtue of the Trinity ordination "did they separate themselves from us."¹⁹¹ Schober ordered that copies of the North Carolina Minutes not be sent to Philip or Bell, as they would be "only wasted once they are sent."¹⁹²

Finally, a long-removed character entered the picture. Paul Henkel, obviously concerned about the situation in North Carolina, set out on an extensive trip through the area. He departed on June 26, just a few weeks after Trinity, and arrived in Tennessee soon thereafter. His son Philip had secured subscriptions and asked father Paul to come. "Father will investigate everything" Philip told his brother Solomon.¹⁹³ Paul was not at all pleased with what he found. After reading the minutes of the "untimely" Synod meeting, he concluded that the actions taken were the independent actions of Storch, Schober, and Miller. As a result of the Trinity meeting, Paul believed that a new Synod in Tennessee was preferable to continued strife. The congregations and pastors in Tennessee were solidly disaffected with the North Carolina Synod, and wanted no more association with it. They pressed Paul to assist them in organizing their own body. Paul made the preliminary efforts through a series of letters, and set up a conference to begin on the third Sunday in September. Knowing that the Lincoln County congregations were in a similar turmoil, he invited David, and Lincoln delegates Frederick Hoke, Daniel Lutz, and others, to attend the sessions.¹⁹⁴

The week of September 19 proved to be a preview of coming attractions, as excerpted from Paul Henkel's Journal:

Sunday the 19th. Preached in same church [St. James] and administered the Lord's Supper with Mr. Bell.

Monday the 20th. Today we took the initial steps toward forming a Conference in Tennessee.

Tuesday and Wednesday, 21, 22. We continued and concluded the work of the Conference.

Thursday and Friday, 23, 24. At home with Philip on Thursday, and on Friday I preached in St. James Church. Rode to the home of Mr. Easterly.¹⁹⁵

During this visit, the senior Henkel was certainly reminded of the details leading up to withholding of financial support from Union Seminary, pending relinquishing of its control to the North Carolina Synod.

Paul Henkel and his wife left Philip's house on the 28th, and arrived at David's on October 4. For the next three weekends, Paul accompanied his son in communion services at School House, Costner's, and White Haven. As Schober's letter to Hoyl was being written, Paul Henkel accompanied his son to St. John's, and conducted a communion service on the very same date -- November 6, 1819. During the period from the April synod meeting until this date, David Henkel's Diary does not list a single confirmation or communion service except in presence of his father. Regardless of his unusual ordination, **David Henkel abided by the six month disciplinary period**

190. Letter from Joseph E. Bell to D. Henkel, June 15, 1819. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Peter Hoyle Certificate, cited above.

191. Letter from Andrew Hoyl to an unnamed congregation, 20 October 1819, "a true copy," to which is attached Schober's advertisement. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. *Carolinan Herald*, p. 24. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, transl., p. 40.

192. Schober to Solomon, 2 Aug 1819, MESDA, 3995-53.

193. Philip to Solomon, 17 Aug 1819, Ger., UVA, 8653-i, Box 2, Folder 1819-1823, 1829, Letters from Philip Henkel.

194. Paul to David, 25 Aug 1819, Henkel Family Papers, Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Gettysburg, PA. Evidence of participation by Hoke, Lutz, or others from Lincoln County has not been located.

195. Fincke's, *Paul Henkel Journal*, p. 446.

resolved by the North Carolina Synod, and provided no ministerial services beyond the limitations of a Catechist!!!¹⁹⁶

In his own hand-writing, David Henkel gives the reasons:

... that for the sake of peace, the Lord's Supper was not administered to my congregations, for nearly six months (lacking a week or two) [from] the time of the April meeting, when at the expiration of said term of time my father visiting me, administered the Lord's Supper to some of my congregations, wherein I merely assisted him at his request. Yet, I had legal authority to have administered it myself, but in order to evade offence I dissolved [sic] it upon him.¹⁹⁷

If David Henkel was trying to make peace (which he apparently was), who would have objected?

While visiting Lincoln County, Paul and David gathered certificates from several respectable witnesses to the Williams/Lineberger/Costner case. The events surrounding Costner's Church were reported with some detail, and in direct opposition to much of the evidence previously obtained by Andrew Hoyl, and many of Henkel's certificates were by the same persons Hoyl had approached. Included were testimonies that Andrew Hoyl had stated he would not prefer charges against David Henkel at the 1819 Synod meeting without forewarning. When Hoyl learned that David Henkel might take legal action, he immediately sent Adam Costner to President Storch's house in Mecklenburg County, whereby they were encouraged to proceed with the presentation of the charges at Synod. There were also several accounts of Hoyl's declarations at Synod, Adam Costner's excommunication, and the Synodical resolutions that followed. The most revealing insinuations of misconduct were included by Deacon Daniel Moser, who stated that Hoyl's doctrinal accusations "were not proven nor believed." He followed:

Andrew Hoyle paid money to G. Shober as treasurer, but Shober gave no account of said money as he did of other monies.¹⁹⁸

Paul Henkel was now convinced of his son's innocence, and a conspiracy by Andrew Hoyl, his allies, and the North Carolina Synod leaders against David Henkel and the doctrines he preached.

However, Paul further investigated the matter in the eastern churches (without David's presence), and was informed (by a German that did not understand all of the English testimonies at David's trial) that the money from Hoyl to Schober was to defray the expenses of his trip to Baltimore (*Reise Kosten nach Baltimore*). He further advised his son not to pursue the issue of bribery, and it appears David obeyed this parental advice.¹⁹⁹ Why would "Dutch Presbyterian" Andrew Hoyl give money to Schober to pursue a supposedly-Lutheran organization?

On their travels through the eastern congregations, Paul Henkel and his wife encountered Pastor Storch. A long conversation ensued, and Storch wished to remedy the damage already done. Paul believed he would be the perfect mediator in the matter. Storch and Schober believed that David and Philip were overly-biased against them and maintained the Synod's position regarding David. Storch stated that correspondence with David or Philip would not prove worthwhile. Paul suggested that a new trial be held in Lincolnton, so he could hear the testimonies himself, and so many of the witnesses could be in attendance. He also offered some information of which Storch was unaware. Paul was advised to further discuss the matter with Schober. A day or so later, Paul Henkel encountered Gottlieb Schober on the road to Pine Church. Little positive conversation ensued.²⁰⁰

196. *David Henkel Diary*, 1819.

197. This quotation is in David Henkel's hand-writing, and is in a notebook housed at the Alderman Library, UVA. Henkel Family Papers, Accession No. 8653-c. Reference has not been found in published material. A portion of this notebook is entitled "Reasons," yet the transcription of "Reasons" does not contain this paragraph and might have been taken from a different source.

198. Many certificates in behalf of David Henkel, copies from The Handley Library, Winchester, VA. The last Moser quote is from the English transcription of his certificate. The German certificate reads: "Andreas Heil bezahlte Geld an den Schatzmeister, welchen aber keine Rechnung davon ablegte."

199. Letter from Paul Henkel to David Henkel, (German), 7 December 1819, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. RCC: It is possible that Hoyl's support of Schober's trip underlined a common belief of Hoyl and Schober that the General Synod could include various denominations – Presbyterians, Reformed, and Lutheran. Hoyl may have endorsed Schober's unionistic opinions.

200. Letter from Philip Henkel to David Henkel, 29 December 1819, in German, with copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Letter from Paul Henkel to David Henkel, 11 November 1819, same source.

When Paul Henkel arrived home, a rather inflammatory letter from Schober soon arrived. Schober accused Paul Henkel of spreading untruths about the North Carolina Synod throughout Lincoln County, and of separating himself from them. Furthermore, Schober suggested that Paul Henkel need not bother himself further by visiting congregations in North Carolina.²⁰¹ Paul, with "no enmity" against his foes, then advised David to take care in what he said and did, and to keep an eye out for anything. He further advised David against any legal action, but did not discourage David from writing a publication in defense of his position.²⁰² It is evident that the Henkel family was now in agreement about the attacks on David, but mysteriously, Paul Henkel's usually-loquacious journal is nearly silent on the events that followed.

By November, Philip Henkel threatened R. J. Miller that he would "put something in print," if Synod refused to settle the issues in a just manner. Word of this reached Schober, who followed with a letter to Andrew Hoyl:

. . . But I wish you not to cease to be attentive to the movements of Lyars [sic]; and that whenever opportunity offers [sic] you would assure the members of the community that we have no other point in view but to keep our Ministry and Church uncontaminated with impurities - of Popish & Despotic arrogance & pride. - and that the Ministers of our Church may live up to the Doctrines they preach, and abide in Faith. The Revd Paul, wrote me a letter which I recd the same day as yours -- but says not a Word of all their machinations, and only writes that he was tired of travelling [sic] & was going home to rest for the winter & would come again in the spring, his letter came unsealed and as I do not know where to send him an answer I take the Liberty to enclose it to you, unsealed to be forwarded to him. The contents are only to give him my opinion that we could very well excuse him from being further troubled with visiting us & wish him a quiet recusitating time with a good conscience.²⁰³

The language above repeated Schober's utter disappointment that David Henkel had not been stripped from the cloth completely. Other portions of the same letter repeat religious affinity towards Hoyl, as he often used the term "our church."²⁰⁴

It is not unlikely that Schober had trouble tracking down Paul Henkel, as he had definitely been a moving target.

Schober's letter to Hoyl also included the following excerpt:

If they want to expose us, they will be exposed, and in that case I must publish the papers & depositions filed at our last Synod, after which no honest man will decide otherwise than that we ought to have dismissed D. totally, but from our side we shall not publish anything. . . .²⁰⁵

St. John's soon became aroused! Hoyl, who had "forgiven" Henkel at the April meeting, heard that a church in Lancaster District, South Carolina, had sent a letter to David Henkel, requesting his services. Hoyl fired them a letter containing "unfavourable [sic] representations," plus Schober's advertisement against Henkel, with the following excerpts:

Having been informed by Samuel S. Hoyle that the man David Hinkle [sic] who has set this part of the world all in an uproar by reporting falsehoods, and sowing the seed of discord among the different persuasions [sic], has visited your parts and informed the people that he is an ordained Minister, and as I am a vindicator of the truth . . .²⁰⁶

The Lancaster congregation, which felt Henkel had always conducted himself among them "as becomes a Christian and a minister," and based on their experiences, they "scarcely" gave "any credit to such evil reports." However,

201. Letter from Gottlieb Schober to Paul Henkel, 22 November 1819, Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

202. Letter from Paul Henkel to David Henkel, 7 December 1819, cited above.

203. Letter from G. Shober to Andrew Hoyl, Nov. 6, 1819, David Hinkle Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina. Hoyl and Schober were both postmasters.

204. *Ibid.*

205. Letter from G. Shober to Andrew Hoyl, Nov. 6, 1819, cited above.

206. Andrew Hoyl to an unnamed Congregation. 20 Oct. 1819, from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

they sent John Funderburgh, Henry Plyler and John M. Vail to North Carolina to investigate the allegations. They carried a letter of authorization and request, dated December 17th, 1819.207

When these messengers arrived at St. John's, there was no doubt as to its members' opinions. St. John's fully rallied behind their leader, had promoted the "Oak Tree Ordination", would not accept the Synod's heavy-handed decision to demote David Henkel, wanted Henkel to continue as their Pastor, and disdained the tactics of Hoyle. An emphatic letter of defense was prepared, and was amply signed by the membership and area sympathizers.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH
LINCOLN COUNTY, N. C.
January 8, 1820

WE, THE SUBSCRIBERS, living near & within the Settlement of St. John's church & its vicinity, feel ourselves in duty bound to protect the innocent, & to defend those who are falsely accused, & published to the world at large.

Mr. David Henkel, a minister of the gospel, who has preached in this settlement & has been the stated minister of St. John's church for more than five years successively. We do hereby certify & declare to the publick at large, that said D. Henkel conducted himself like an honest, upright, and well-behaved person, & as a man of truth, during the whole time of his ministry among us. Neither are we acquainted with any base conduct in him, nor know that he ever attempted to rob honest people of their good reputation. All evil reports which are afloat about him, have no manner of weight with us, not to esteem him as a worthy minister of the gospel: nor has any publication concerning him, diminished his reputation among us, as we know his character and standing as a minister too well.208

John Stein, sen.
Peter Little, Esq.
Christopher Siegman
John Smith
John Eisenhauer
Frederick Hoke, Esq.
Peter Hoke
Daniel Hoke
Frederick Hoke, jun.
Lewis Haeflfer, sen.
Lewis Haeflfer, jun.
Andrew Killian
Jacob Weik
John Weik
Jacob Stein
Daniel Stein
Jacob Deal
George Siegman, sen.
John Setzer
Mathias Barringer
Bernhard Ba[uer]
[H]enry Gross

207. David Henkel Notebook. Samuel Smith Hoyle must have been a close relative of Andrew Hoyle, as Andrew Hoyle provided his marriage bond.

208. The text was taken from a copy of one of the actual petitions that circulated through St. John's "settlement," as obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Apparently, the names from various St. John's petitions were consolidated into a journal, and the petition text changed slightly during transcription. Later typed transcriptions have yet slightly different wording. This wording contains the only language seen which addresses the St. John's thoughts about the various publications. Apologies for any confusion between dates, text, and names, but this is the only primary source petition text found. The names in the petitions were taken from the David Henkel Notebook from the same Library. Where the pages were damaged, the missing names, or portions thereof, were added in [brackets] from the L. L. Lohr Transcription. There are at least thirteen more names in the hand-written journal than on the Lohr Transcription.

William Sieg[man]
[Hen]ry Siegman
John [Miller]
Adam [Bolich]
[possibly another name]
[An]thony Muss
Jacob Huffman
Conrad Weinberger
George Legle
Daniel Eisenhauer
Dewalt Grund
Henry Stein
Frederick Mock
David Alexander
Michael Hefner
Philipp Hetrick
Henry Tritt
John Fulbright
Nicholas Zimmerman
John Tritt
Andrew Hoke
[Pe]ter Rees
John Rees
Ja[cob] Rees
Samuel Lusk
Joseph Oliver
John Hoke
Adam Bolich
Daniel Yount
Wm. Fulbright
Leonard Klein
Jacob Seip
Jacob Legel
Pe[ter] Lagel
Adam Kuntz
Wm. Odam
Joseph Schook
Wm. Eckert
Henry Yount
John Siegman
John Sammet
George Shook
Andrew Yount
Jacob Fullbright
John Stein, jun.
Jacob Miller
John Kloninger
Ephraim Yount
[Dan]iel Car
Henry Grund
M[oses] Justice
Andrew Fulbright]
[Pe]ter Rees
John Rees

Jac[ob Ree]s
George Smith
Daniel [? Woodrin ?]g
W[illiam Haine]n
Andrew Shook
Christopher Huffman
Henry Dagenhardt
John Stein
Henry Kibler
Henry Shook
Philip Staway
Alexander Grayham
Peter Little, jun.
Jacob Little
John Noll
Jacob Bastian sen.
Jacob Bastian, jun.
Jacob Lewis
Aaron Townson
Christopher Lewis
John Degenhardt
George Muss
Daniel Setzer
Benedict Levan
Philip Eisenhauer
Adam Grund
Daniel Bauman
Adam Noll
George Eisenhauer
Peter Bauman
Martin Eisenhauer
John Miller
Solomon Hetrich
John Weaver
Simon Eckert
John Miller, jun.
Peter Noll
Godfrey Bolick
John Yount
Hugh Warren
James Williams
Frederick Gryde[r]
James Cowen
Robert [Warren]
Martin Gryder
[Jos]hua [War]ren
[Elija]h Warren
Anderson Sherril
Peter Mock
John Zeller
Conrad Zeller
Ephraim Christopher
Henry Dengenhart, jun.
Dewald Little

Hugh Warren, sen.
Robert Warren, jun.
Daniel Warren
Bernhart Moser
Thomas Oliver
Joseph Lagel
John Legal
John Hefner, jun.
John Hetrick, jun.
Nathan Matthews
B. Siegman
S. Moser.

The importance of this document cannot be under-estimated, as it is one of the earliest-known records, which could be construed as a family membership list of the St. John's congregation. Many names were signed by a few persons, others signed with their X-marks. Although Henkel wrote the petition, the signatures were in the handwriting of others. Whether all members were represented is indeterminable. It is obvious that the names are males only, and did not include children.

Similar petitions were also prepared by "the subscribers living near the waters of Beaverdam and Longcreek", School House Church (Daniel's), "White Haven meeting house", the "neighborhood of Lebanon meeting house", Rocky River of Mecklenburg, and Andrew Hoyl's own church, Philadelphia meeting house.

... the Subscribers ... have been acquainted with the Reverend David Henkel, as he has frequently preached in this neighbourhood & we never saw any misconduct in him as a Christian & a minister of the gospel.

... we ... have been acquainted with the Reverend David Henkel for some considerable length of time, as he has successively preached in the aforesaid meeting house, more than six years, & that we never saw any base conduct in him, as it respects a Citizen a moral person, a Christian & a minister of the gospel: & we believe that he aims at the promotion of the welfare [sic] of mankind.

... we [have be]come well acquainted with him & his conduct, we therefore [unclear] request [damaged area] that he has ever since we know him conducted himself like an honest, sober, sedate, familiar & condescending person. As a minister he has honoured his Office.

... we have been aquainted [sic] with the Reverend David Henkel for several years past, and who hath lived in our neighborhood for some length of time, and hath behaved himself as a good neighbor and citizen, as is of good moral character.

... they have known the Reverend David Henkel a long time & that he has behaved himself as an honest, upright & well-behaved person as becomes the office he bears.

... we ... testify the same as those of White Haven do, with respect to the conduct of Rev. David Henkel.²⁰⁹

The waves of Henkel support from St. John's and other congregations demonstrate nearly complete disregard for the actions of the North Carolina Synod leaders, who had most recently demoted their pastor, rather than ordain him. The list of 138 names from St. John's far exceeded the submissions from any other congregation. If women and children were added to the total number of signatures, **St. John's must have had between 500 and 1000 worshipers in 1820!** This was no small Lutheran congregation, and may have been the **largest Lutheran Church in the State of North Carolina!** No other early Lutheran Church document has been seen with a number of names approaching 138 men! For instance, in the same year, a much older congregation, St. John's, Salisbury, reported a male communicant membership list of 74 souls. Other churches near Salisbury had been reported by Paul Henkel as having communed over 250 prior to 1806, but some of these had been decimated by migration and other influences.²¹⁰

209. *Ibid.* Of curious note, St. Paul's, which had been one of Henkel's congregations in 1819, did not present a petition, yet Jacob Weik [Wike], who signed a very incriminating deposition against Henkel for Andrew Hoyl signed the St. John's petition.

210. John Baxter Moose, "The First Constitution of St. John's Church," [Salisbury] in *North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. XIII, No. 4, (Raleigh: October 1936), pp. 353-355. Bernheim, p. 267, from Paul Henkel report of 1806 to VA Synod. Bernheim also reports of a confirmation class of 77 at Buffalo Creek, St. John's, Cabarrus, in spring of 1821, and 83 at Organ Church, Rowan County after 1823, indicating that these two congregations were quite large also. These two confirmations were after several years of declining health by Pastor

One phrase in this petition is of primary importance to the Church historian. Past writers have repeatedly listed Daniel Moser as a regular pastor of St. John's. This was not so prior to this petition, as David Henkel was described by a great number of petitioners as having been "the stated minister of St. John's church for more than five years successively," which included the entire period of time after Philip Henkel relocated to Tennessee in late 1814 to the date of the petition.

When Paul Henkel notified Philip about the unfruitful November meeting with Storch, Philip corresponded with David to plan upcoming strategy. Philip favored a strong and determined approach at the next Synod meeting. He did not feel that they had broken the Synod's rules, did not regret the Oak Tree Ordinations, and felt that they should draw the line regarding David's ordination. He hoped that when the point was made, the senior pastors would acquiesce. The Tennessee pastors were generally behind Philip's actions, and Paul Henkel himself was making plans to be present in Lincolnton on Trinity. One alternative was to withdraw from the North Carolina Synod and join the newly-organized Ohio Synod. A second was to form a Synod of their own in Tennessee.²¹¹ St. John's and the other area congregations were in the middle of what was about to take place. And thus, the stage was set for an interesting discussion at the next Synod meeting, when personalities, ordination, constitutionality, allegations of false charges, the General Synod, Lutheran doctrine, and a shortage of calm temperament would fatally collide.

THE CONSPIRACY

If the plot were not already thick enough, on May 19, 1820, exactly nine days before the Synod meeting, Andrew Hoyl re-entered the picture, and published a letter in *The Star, and North-Carolina State Gazette*, a leading newspaper of the era. Hoyl repeated the charges from the Williams/Lineberger case, including that Henkel set up a meeting at a distant church and contacted individual members,

where he related a harangue, made up by himself, which he thought would cause his hearers to believe that I had reported falsehoods against him; . . . That he had now procured certificates that would entirely clear him; . . . and that I [Hoyl] had told lies on him; that he had never sworn [sic] any thing but what was true; & that it was an arrent [sic] lie; . . . that I kept the deposition concealed . . . ²¹²

and gave a brief historical account of the Synod's response and the later ordination. He contended that Philip Henkel "rushed in like a horse into a battle, and arbitrarily ordained him, under an oak tree." He considered Philip's actions "inconsiderate," but acknowledged that Philip may not have known the full details of the charges against his brother.²¹³

Hoyl then proceeded to attack the actions of Paul Henkel at his October visits to several area churches, in his investigation of the charges against David. The senior Henkel was accused of reporting falsely at meetings conducted after the normal services:

That he had made particular enquiry respecting the charges against his son David, and was very glad to find that they were groundless or false--when and where his son David, myself and several of the jury, who tried and found him guilty, were actually present, and all knew that his assertion was not true, and thus, instead of admonishing his son, and endeavouring to bring him to his early repentance, aided him with another untruth, in order to persuade the ignorant that even that which was proven against his son, and acknowledged by himself in presence of the synod was not true.²¹⁴

Storch and may have been the first confirmation classes for some time [pp. 455-456]. School House Church Register, transcr., lists 55 communicants in April 1820 (copy seen in McCubbins Collection, Rowan County Library, with original in NC Synod Archives).

211. Letters from Philip Henkel to David Henkel, dated 9 December 1819, 29 December 1819, and March 14, 1820, copies from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. The first two letters are in German script, and partial translations were made by the author and Robert C. Carpenter, Bessemer City, NC. The third letter is in a nice English handwriting.

212. *The Star*, Hoyl's letter.

213. *Ibid.*

214. *Ibid.* This allegation has not been seen in any other North Carolina Lutheran History.

New charges were directed at David Henkel. Henkel had befriended a man named John Brown, who portrayed himself as a former Colonel in the Revolutionary War. Brown had lost his horse, and was therefore unable to return to his house and property in Virginia. Hoyl accused Henkel of composing a certificate, dated October 8th, 1819, attesting to Brown's character and past heroic exploits. Brown then approached members of Henkel's congregations, displayed the certificate, and appealed to their Christian charity for purposes of purchasing a horse. Henkel countered that this was not a personal certificate in Brown's behalf, but that he wrote the document in accordance with Brown's own statements, and that his name was included with his personal contribution in Brown's behalf. Hoyl accused Brown of relating to the people that Hoyl "had treated Henkle [sic] very ill" and that he "was far from being a gentleman." Hoyl was convinced that Brown's statements were made to repay Henkel for his efforts.²¹⁵

Hoyl had known Brown years earlier, when Brown lived in Rutherford, near Hoyl's father. Prior to Henkel's arrival in North Carolina, Hoyl related, "Brown had abandoned his family and left them to the mercy of my Father, and other neighbors." He described Brown as "an old man of good appearance & smooth conversation, and calculated to deceive strangers, especially such as are unacquainted with imposters." Yet Hoyl's first cousin felt no such resentment towards Brown, as Peter Hoyl was one of the largest monetary contributors towards alleviation of Brown's misfortunes. Truly, as Henkel was born years after the Revolutionary War, any statement relating to Brown's military service could not have been made based on personal knowledge. Andrew Hoyl viewed Henkel's and Brown's activities as a plot against him, and concluded his assault:

... but I also know that a generous public will excuse me, when I inform them that D. Henkle [sic], although young took an ungenerous turn, after compromising with me, in order to silence me; and then immediately set the aforesaid machinery into operation-and if there is nothing said or done to rebut falsehoods, some will believe David, some his father and some the old impostor, BROWN; that at length the public will be persuaded [sic] to believe a lie, to the great injury of the Venerable Louterian [sic] Clergy of N C. the adjacent States, and myself.

David Henkel and his blood, kin excepted, who it is said are about to separate themselves from that body, because they refused to ordain David--when in that case they done [sic] nothing but their duty, as the scripture forbids a double tongued man from being a teacher in the church. ANDREW HOYLE.

Hoylsville, Lincoln county, N.C. April 25, 1820.²¹⁶

The timing and method of Hoyl's publication are critical. North Carolina Synod pastors serving out-of-state churches probably did not receive this newspaper, were likely to have easily been swayed by "Rich Andrew" Hoyl and Synod leaders, and would have been caught by surprise at the Synod meeting. But most importantly, by the time this report reached the western Piedmont, there was little time to marshal any sort of defense against the new allegations -- particularly by Tennessean Philip Henkel and Virginian Paul Henkel. Now an accepted member of the Moravian congregation of Salem, Gottlieb Schober, in conspiracy with Andrew Hoyl, fully intended to complete the unfinished business from a year earlier! And the only way to accomplish this was to rid themselves of all the Henkels!²¹⁷

THE "DISPUTE SYNOD"

The Synod meeting of 1820 began on May 28 at Emmanuel's Church in Lincolnton. Paul Henkel had arrived a few days before and was staying with David. Philip was also present for the occasion. On Sunday, worship services were held, but Paul and David did not attend. Only Philip went to Lincolnton, where he conversed with Joseph Bell (and no others).²¹⁸

215. *Ibid.* Answers to Andrew Hoyle's Publication against the Reverend David Henkel by a committee of investigation, cited previously.

216. Hoyle Letter, *The Star*. David Henkel's Certificate on Behalf of Col. John Brown, 8 October 1819, to which is attached a list of contributors. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

217. Records prior to the 1820 meeting, as were available to this writer, do not suggest the involvement in this scheme by others within the North Carolina Synod; however, the actions of Storch at the meeting indicate that he knew of Schober's activities, and concurred.

218. Paul and David to Solomon, 31 May 1820, 8356-4, Box 1, 1818-1820, Paul Henkel Letters, Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

Monday marked the opening for official synodical business, and for the second consecutive Trinity Monday, Lutherans assembled under the large oak trees in the Church yard. A crowd, including those of other denominations, measured into the hundreds. David Henkel's recent publication to vindicate his character, and Hoyl's publication intending to defame it were but two of the preludes of the Synod sessions. Nearly the entire roster of pastors was present, with the notable exception of Zink and Miller from Tennessee.²¹⁹

Rev. Jacob Scherer approached Philip Henkel, as some Synod leaders felt that both David and Paul were no longer members. Col. John Hoke, of Lincolnton, witnessed this conversation, and related that the Synod intended to place Philip under a synodical trial for his ordination of David and Bell a year earlier. Scherer asked Philip the same question that had been asked David at his trial in 1819, "Will you be governed by the majority?" Philip concluded from this type of interrogation, "that they intended to take the advantage of me." He responded that he would submit himself to a trial, but would not submit himself to the majority -- only to the Constitution of the synod.²²⁰

A deputy "from the hostile clerical church" approached a group of three or four pastors, and a verbal shot was fired:

WILL YOU ALLOW YOURSELVES TO BE DIRECTED BY A MAJORITY OF PASTORS AND DEPUTIES?²²¹

A written answer was presented:

WE WILL ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE DIRECTED BY THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH, WRITTEN IN 1817, AND THE TEACHINGS OF THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION!²²²

The contending parties separated into two camps. One group consisted of several pastors and a few deputies, and the second, of three pastors and many deputies. An argument ensued. The Henkels felt they had presented the above answer in a clear and fair manner. But they also wanted David's ordination to be officially recognized, and they did not agree with the General Synod (year-old empire of the fanatics).²²³

There was then a parting of the ways. The church was soon opened, and Schober appeared with a suitcase of documents and references, and David, with a leathery sack of evidence to be used in his own defense.²²⁴

"WILL YOU WITHDRAW FROM SYNOD?"

We will not withdraw from the Synod, nor will we be ruled by the majority, but are ready and willing to investigate and decide every thing according to the teachings of the Augsburg Confession and the Constitution of the Synod, but not otherwise!²²⁵

David Henkel demanded an oral answer to his questions. The Synod answers were in the negative.

Henkel: "That is not the thing. I only ask, Will you, or will you not?" [submit to the Augsburg Confession and Constitution]

Synod: "We will not."

Henkel: "This is all I want to know."

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ Col. John Hoke Deposition, 7 Sep 1829, Philip Henkel Deposition, 11 Sep 1829, NC Archives, NC Supreme Court file 1531.

²²¹ Paul to Solomon, 31 May 1820, cited above.

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ *Ibid.* Henkel, p. 20.

Henkel walked away. The warm discussion continued for a while longer, with the Henkels adamantly maintaining that doctrinal issues should be decided based on the Word of God and not the vote of the majority of men.²²⁶

Schober outwardly endorsed the Moravian tradition, where matters of importance or matters of doubt should not be decided by majority vote. The same held true for cases where the Bible offered clear and distinct answers. Routine business matters, such as time and place of meetings, and even ordinations, could be decided by the majority. On this day, with control of the majority within his grasp, and upon announcement that David Henkel, Joseph E. Bell, and Paul Henkel were not Synod members, Schober insisted that the majority vote decide **all** the disputed matters -- doctrinal and otherwise. Only Philip Henkel was encouraged to attend the meeting, provided he would "submit to be governed by a majority of votes."²²⁷

Like President Storch a year earlier, the Henkels were accused of threatening to deny use of the Emmanuel's Church building for synodical activities.²²⁸

The Synod meeting finally convened with President Storch presenting a sermon, with a prayer for unity. Secretary Schober then presented an English dissertation that included statements that the Synod was "by no means bound, to act according to the Constitution or Regulation of the Synod." Schober argued that **Luther** had been hurriedly written, and should not be considered as a rule.²²⁹

Philip Henkel then rose, and his adherents believed he disproved both Storch and Schober. David followed his brother, and many of the disputed issues were argued in the Church. The question followed, as to whether the Henkels wanted to unite and be seated as members of the Synod. They repeated that they would be seated only if Synod's own Constitution was recognized, and that the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession were observed -- not the majority of votes. The General Synod was also a major issue.²³⁰

Of course, one of the first matters of business was the constitutionality of the "untimely Synod" of the previous year. Schober denied that there was "an approved constitution," as **Luther** was written based on Paul Henkel's notes, and the word "constitution" was not to be found.²³¹

As David Henkel later wrote:

But the Rev. Stork and Shober denied that we had a ratified constitution. . . . Why did they deny the constitution? They well knew that they had violated it in 1819; that we were about to bring them into account for it; that, agreeably to it, their transactions in April would be declared void.²³²

Schober responded:

. . . the 2d article of the constitution, so far as the time of meeting on Trinity, hath never been ratified as a constitutional article before Lincoln Synod.²³³

By acknowledging unconstitutionality of the April 1819 meeting, the Synod would have also recognized legitimacy of the Trinity Sunday meeting. It mattered not that a committee had approved the Constitution appended to **Luther**, that the delegation had unanimously accepted it, that 1500 copies were published with the word "constitution" on the front cover, that the Synod was governed by rules prior to 1817, or that they had elected officers and were conducting Synod business by some rule or other, constitutionality was not to be an issue, as the original claims were that there was no such document.

226. *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

227. Gottlieb Shober to Evan Alexander, dated 20 January 1793, Schober Papers, Old Salem Archives. Schober gives a detailed description of Moravian Synodical government in this lengthy letter. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 41.

228. *Shober's Review*, p. 26. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 41. Record cannot be found that Emmanuel's was ever one of David Henkel's regular congregations, as his own diary attests. It is unclear how the Henkels could have denied use of this building, as was later charged.

229. *Shober's Review*, p. 23. Paul to Solomon, 31 May 1820, cited above, generally agrees with Schober's account.

230. Paul to Solomon, 31 May 1820, cited above.

231. *Schober's Review*, p. 19.

232. *Carolinian Herald*, p. 30.

233. *Shober's Review*, 27.

On Tuesday, with the Henkels being absent, Pastor R. J. Miller, who was not present when the constitution was denied, admitted that he wrote it "with his own hands," and "made Schober acknowledge his error."²³⁴

Regarding *Luther's* citation that David Henkel was scheduled to be ordained "next Trinity," Schober responded that it was an "error in the book called *Luther*, and which they there charged me with having adulterated, as I had in some measure cured the error by pasting a paper over one word."²³⁵

The minutes of the previous meeting were then read, and the doctrinal debates were resurrected, with the Augsburg Confession pitted against *Luther*. The subjects were "regeneration and perseverance in faith," "baptism," and "communion." At some time during the debates, Storch offered a signal towards peace when he stated, "Faults on both sides have been committed; let us forget, and forgive, and unite." Paul Henkel was the first who responded, "I cannot unite with such a body." Storch later claimed that the senior Henkel's reasons were "that a majority would vote for a union, and that we [majority of the synod] believe Mr. Hoyle's publication."²³⁶

They abruptly concluded, when a Synod officer stated, "Whoever is a right Lutheran, let him follow us out to J. H.'s Hotel. There we will begin our Synod!" The reply was predictable, "Whoever is a real fanatic (Schwamer), let him follow; for you are no true Lutheran preachers; you are fanatics, and to such you belong." The Synod reconvened in John Harry's hotel in Lincolnton, "a house of entertainment," to consider the normal Synodical business of the year, including that of joining the General Synod. David, Philip, and Paul Henkel, with several of their delegates, remained behind, considered the matter for some time, and adjourned.²³⁷ Technically, the North Carolina Synod withdrew from the Henkels and their delegates.

Where Synod Minutes describe the early session in terms such as "David's coarseness," "Dictator," and "strikingly impolite," delegate Jacob Aderhold defended Henkel's behavior -- that the problems were the denial of the constitution "in the face of the whole audience, with denial of unconstitutional transactions, . . . and departing from Lutheran Doctrin[e] . . . for which conduct Mr. David Hinkel [sic], with his brother Philip, and there [sic] father upraded [sic] them."²³⁸

David Henkel, and some of his party, traveled to his house, about five miles from Lincolnton. Delegates John Abernethy of Whitehaven, and Jacob Aderhold from Beaver Dam, attended most of the remainder of the Synod. On the next morning, David Henkel sent Jacob Plyer, Jr., delegate from Lancaster, S. C., to the meeting, with a message for Abernethy and Aderhold, "cautioning them not to take seats with said connection, whilst they continued in their lawless situation." When the Synod recognized existence of its Constitution, Aderhold, thinking he "might perhaps have a chance to get justis [sic]," presented a certificate to the Synod Secretary. The acting President asked the two remaining delegates from David Henkel's congregations if they "would consider themselves bound to the rules of this Sinod [sic] and be governed by the majorety [sic] of votes." They consented, providing "the Sinod [sic] wold [sic] be governed by the Constitution." Aderhold cites an interrogatory that is omitted from the Synod Minutes:

But we ware [sic] asked a most imperdinent [sic] question by one of the officers of the Sinod [sic], which was, will you stil[l] continue Mr. David Hinkel [sic] as your Minister? Which question likewise we answered in the affirmative [sic], but not as Deputys [sic], only for ourselves, not knowing what our Congregations wold [sic] do -- but on condition if Mr. David Hinkel wold [sic] conduct himself agreeable to the Constitution of this Sinod [sic], which we beleaved [sic] he did.²³⁹

Abernathy followed with a motion that since the previous April Synod meeting was not in accordance with the Constitution, that its transactions be not binding. Aderhold seconded the motion, and it was summarily

234. *Ibid.* p. 19. *Caroliman Herald*, p. 30.

235. *Shober's Review*, p. 46. The word pasted over was "Trinity."

236. *Ibid.* pp. 26, 37. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, transl., pp. 41-42.

237. Henkel, pp. 21-23. *Shober's Review*, p. 40. David Henkel, "Reasons", typed transcription, found at the Lutheran Archives in Salisbury, NC. *Caroliman Herald*, p. 27. No St. John's delegate was seated at this meeting.

238. Jacob Aderhold, To the Citizens of this and adjacent State and all that Love truth, dated 12 February 1821. Copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA, hereinafter referenced Aderhold's Testimony. Punctuation added for clarity. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, pp. 42-44. Surprisingly, no delegate from St. John's, Daniels, or Philadelphia is named in the Synod Minutes, but it is highly probable that they were present, but did not re-convene at the sessions at John Harry's Hotel.

239. Aderhold's Testimony. "Reasons".

rejected. Abernethy followed by suggesting that if Joseph E. Bell's ordination was accepted, then so should Henkel's be, as both had been performed by the same Pastor, and had occurred on the same date, under the same circumstances, and under the same trees. Schober responded, "there is a great difference between the two, for there are some charges against David Henkel." Schober elaborated that, "the latter was a candidate [Bell], and David a legal but very improper catechet. And his baptizings and confirmations are not valid in our church and ought to be in none." To this action, Henkel later responded, "If they received Mr. Bell as a regular ordained minister, then they must have recognized the transactions of the legal Synod held on Trinity 1819, as legal."²⁴⁰

Abernethy contended that the Synod should "then try him according [sic] to the Constitution for any charge ye have against him since last Sinod [sic]." This was viewed as an "impertinent" request, and the Synod "did not suffer it to be debated." Aderhold concluded from this sequence, that justice "was not intended towards the minority," as "honest men" would have at least discussed and voted on the legitimate motions. He felt that if the Synod leaders thought they had any charges they felt they could prove against Henkel, they would not have refused the trial. Synod had no intention of beginning any trial, claiming Henkel's absence as the reason. Abernathy persisted that if Henkel's constitutional ordination was accepted, and that if Synod were to act on "constitutional principles," Henkel would be contacted and he would return to the meeting. "We have nothing to do with him," was the response Aderhold remembered. Yet, Synod followed with "degrading questions against him [Henkel]." When the Synod minutes were printed, Henkel was described as behaving with "conspicuous incivility" the previous Monday, and that "David Henkel is therefore no Minister of the Lutheran Church of North Carolina and Adjacent States," and that "this Synod is not responsible for the conduct and doctrines of David Henkel, either in the pulpit or elsewhere."²⁴¹

Henkel wrote:

It is true what Mr. Aderhold states. But it was not my intention only: to suffer myself to be tried legally: but also to try them upon the same ground.²⁴²

The North Carolina Synod leaders wanted none of this! Schober knew Henkel was a spirited, but smart, young man. He also knew that Henkel would produce a Biblical or historical Lutheran source as a reference for every word he said. The North Carolina Synod moved to John Harry's, and separated themselves from the Henkels and most of the congregations in Lincoln County.

Continuing the trend of ex post facto ordination policies, the following resolution was passed:

... no ordination shall be legal in our Church, or considered valid, which is not administered under the authority or instruction of Synod, and is performed by at least two ordained ministers.²⁴³

By passage of this rule, Synod reacted to the oak tree ordinations and admitted the validity of prior ordinations, performed by a single pastor, not under the authority of Synod.

After Synod, the ultimate verdict in the case belonged to Henkel's congregations, and a joint committee of Elders was established to investigate the merits of Hoyl's published charges. The report is very lengthy, and cannot be included in its entirety. In summary, the committee determined that Hoyl had never accused Henkel of intentionally swearing falsely on the deposition, but admitted that Henkel had forgotten a portion. Regarding Andrew Hoyl's "lie-bill" that Henkel related to Jacob Wike, the committee concluded that it was actually an erroneous statement made by an "innocently betrayed" individual and repeated by Henkel. They found that the accusations at 1819 Synod were presented without forewarning, and that Henkel had no fair opportunity to gather evidence and martial his defense for this "trial." He had no opportunity to cross-examine many witnesses whose sworn depositions appeared at the April 1819 Synod meeting. Henkel and Hoyl had supposedly reached a compromise at the Synod meeting, yet Hoyl stated that he had been "nearly silent," and proceeded with his

240. *Ibid.* *Carolinian Herald*, pp. 37, 40. *Schober's Review*, p. 31.

241. Aderhold's Testimony. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 45. There is no notation in either source that the Synod (as a body) ever voted on David Henkel's ordination status after the constitution was recognized.

242. David Henkel manuscript, "Reasons" (maybe), Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, Accession No. 8653-c, Box 3. Original script.

243. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, transl., p. 43.

publication. Whereas Synod had found Henkel guilty, they later declared "him to possess the necessary qualifications to bear the office of an evangelical teacher and offer him a letter of recommendation." Hoyle's accusations against Paul Henkel were disregarded, as this man's general reputation required no vindication in view of the Elders.²⁴⁴

The committee attacked the untimely 1819 Synod meeting by censuring David Henkel: "We can not fully exonerate Mr. Henkel: We censure him justly, for honouring [sic] an unlawful assembly of men convened unlawfully with his presence." In conclusion, the Committee stated, "as long as we find no greater fault with Mr. Henkel than hitherto, we can by no means think of dismissing him as our pastor: Especially as we wish rather to support his religious cause than his person." They recommended that Hoyle "cease his undertaking." The report was signed by fifteen Elders from several congregations, including John Smith and Christopher Sigman from St. John's.²⁴⁵

The committee report was then presented to the various church councils for endorsement. The councils formulated the following certificate supporting the committee's determinations:

We, the subscribers, constituting select councils for the purpose of examining the report of the committee of investigation, who had met in Lincolnton on the 18th of July, for the purpose of investigating David Henkel, declare, that we have examined said report, and do highly approve of the same. And from the just respectability we entertain of the persons who constituted said committee, we have no doubt but they examined all the charges impartially, agreeably to the testimonies of respectable witnesses. We acquiesce in their verdict. It is also our opinion, that there are no just grounds why the Rev. David Henkel should not be respected as a worthy pastor of the church. All the charges exhibited against him have not in the least lessened his good reputation in our view.²⁴⁶

This was signed by seventy-one council members from St. John's, Lebanon, White Haven, Philadelphia, Beaver Dam, and School House Churches. The St. John's signatories include the following eighteen names:

Peter Little, Esq.
John Stein, sen.
George Smith
John Miller
Joseph Isenhower
Henry Gross
Henry Stein
John Moser
Christian Sammet
Henry Dejenhart
Philip Hetrick
Daniel Hoke
Daniel Bowman
Anthony Moos
Henry Yount
Lewis Hafer, jun.
John Isenhower, sen.
Frederick Hoke, Esq.²⁴⁷

Schober attempted to discredit the verdict of the committee of elders, as they were "hand-picked" by Henkel. He then refuted the various church councils: "Your seventy-odd councillors [sic], meeting in detached parties, at

244. Answers to Andrew Hoyle's Publication against the Reverend David Henkel by a committee of investigation, July 20, 1820, transcr., Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. The manuscript copy of this document is at Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Gettysburg, PA.

245. *Ibid.* The name of Peter Hoke was also included, and it cannot be determined that the signer of the petition was the one at St. John's.

246. *Carolinian Herald*, p. 26. The manuscript copy of this document is at Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Gettysburg, PA.

247. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

sundry times, if they all examined and signed their investigation, had much trouble to prop the committee's insignificant certificate."248

On July 17, 1820, the Tennessee Synod (sometimes called a "Conference") was formed at Solomon's Church, Cove Creek, Tennessee, as arranged by Pastor George Easterly. In addition to pastor loci, Philip Henkel, Pastors Paul Henkel, Adam Miller, and Jacob Zink were present. David Henkel, whose wife was expecting a child in the very near future, was not present but was admitted as a member. No delegate was present from the North Carolina Churches, as they were then engaged in the investigation of Hoyl's publication. No North Carolina church is specifically mentioned in the minutes of this meeting, but the admission of David Henkel implies that his congregations were also received. So Paul Henkel, original founder of the North Carolina Synod, was also involved in formation of the first offshoot, the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod.249

At this meeting of the Tennessee Synod, the German language was accepted as the normal medium, as, "we find very few entirely English preachers who accept the doctrines of our Church, or desire to preach them." They further claimed that they were "probably" the only synod in the "United States of America that unreservedly received and acknowledged the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as its confessional basis"250

The positions of David Henkel and the Tennessee Synod were favorable to their congregations, and were accepted after a few years by a great majority of the area churches. In addition, several congregations from the eastern area were aroused to the Tennessee Synod message. One was dissatisfied with their current supply pastor, Gottlieb Schober, and petitioned the Tennessee Synod for ministerial assistance. Similar advances were made by other congregations, including Rocky River in Cabarrus County, which was being served by Storch.251

Meanwhile, with the withdrawal of most of the confessionally conservative pastorate, the make-up of the North Carolina Synod was altered drastically. There was the additional loss of patriarch Robert J. Miller, who after twenty-seven years of faithful service to the Lutheran Church, had never renounced his Episcopal faith and was re-ordained as bishop of that denomination. Also, Joseph E. Bell, who had made amends at the 1820 North Carolina Synod meeting, withdrew from both disputing parties, became a Presbyterian Pastor in Lincoln County, where he resumed teaching and preaching in many of the same pulpits with Henkel and Moser. Storch, who had long been afflicted with illness, curtailed his activities even further. Daniel Moser remained aloof for several years. The North Carolina Synod joined the General Synod and met one year with the newly-formed Episcopal ministerium in North Carolina. The latter was due to Miller's connections. In 1820, Schober and Pastor Peter Schmucker, attended the General Synod meeting, and stated, "a large majority of the members of the North Carolina Synod approve the proposed plan, and desire that the General Synod be organized by all means."252

Possibly the first publication to reach North Carolina concerning the General Synod was **Bedenklichen Ursachen** or **Serious/Grave Reasons** which was written by the Ohio Synod. The shipment of these German pamphlets was intercepted by Gottlieb Schober, postmaster in Salem. He vandalized the materials and then sent them to Lincoln County. This episode aroused the Henkels to write more pamphlets and to use caution in mailing letters or materials, using Raleigh, Charleston, or private conveyance.253

In 1821 **Kurze Nachricht** was published by Henkel Press. This 45 page German publication has been ignored by many historians. It provided minutes of the first Tennessee Synod meeting in 1820 which included rules the synod operated under until it wrote its own constitution. The second part of the publication presented the events and circumstances surrounding the ordination of David Henkel and the split of the North Carolina Synod with emphasis upon doctrinal issues. Henkel opposition to the General Synod was included. The final part of the publication was a treatise on holy baptism.254

248. *Schober's Review*, pp. 21, 40.

249. Henkel, p. 24-25.

250. *Ibid*, pp. 25, 32. The North Carolina Synod had accepted the Augsburg Confession in *Luther*, but did not stipulate the "Unaltered" version.

251. Henkel, pp. 44-45, 49, 50, 57, 61, 67.

252. Bernheim & Cox, pp. 59-60. Bernheim, p. 461. Morgan, pp. 52-53. J. W. Early, "The Ministerium of Pennsylvania and the Organization of the General Synod," *Lutheran Church Review*, Vol. XI, (Mt. Airy, PA: 1892), p. 67. Letter from John Olinger to Solomon Henkel relates Bell's actions, Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, Accession No. 8653-d, Box 3, Miscellaneous Correspondence. G. MacLaren Brydon, "The Ministry of the Reverend Robert Johnston Miller in North Carolina" (typescript), Alderman Library, UVA, Accession #10340.

253. David to Solomon, 3 Oct 1820, and 18 Dec 1820, UVA, 8653-c, Box 1, 1820-1821, Letters from David Henkel. See also *Kurze Nachricht*, pp. 160-168.

254. *Kurze Nachricht*, New Market, Va. in S. Henkel's Printing Works, 1821. A copy of this rare document may be found in the Special

But the war of words had just begun, and it was primarily a two-man show. Motivated by the negative comments in the North Carolina Synod Minutes, David Henkel published a sixty-five page pamphlet entitled *Carolinian Herald of Liberty: Religious and Political*, which defended his actions during the years 1819 and 1820, and offered opposition to the idea of a General Synod. He also used this pamphlet as an opportunity to present a doctrinal address on the Lord's Supper. The North Carolina Synod, at its meeting in John Harry's, had issued a statement in response to an inquiry made by Methodist Pastor James Hill: "We do not believe, nor teach, that the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ is corporally received along with the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper; but that the true believer does spiritually receive and partake of the same through faith in Jesus Christ . . ." This was opposed to the 10th Article of the "Unaltered" Augsburg Confession, and Henkel emphatically pointed out this discrepancy.²⁵⁵

When Henkel's publication was circulated, President Storch, although somewhat ill, communicated to Schober that "the fellow ought to be smarted and humbled as it is safe," and that Schober ought to "let out against his arrogance." He offered suggestions, and encouraged Schober to sternly answer the charges contained in Henkel's "disgraceful pamphlet." Schober quickly followed with a publication entitled *Review of a Pamphlet, issued from the Press of the Western Carolinian, in Salisbury, N. C., etc.* The North Carolina Synod, at its June meeting of 1821, approved of the general content of Schober's publication, but Schober stated that much of the language and opinions were his own.²⁵⁶

Both pamphlets exhibit considerable bias, the historical accounts differ on not a few points of contention, and the personality dispute between the authors is vivid. They represent first-class examples of the demagoguery of nineteenth century writers of pamphlets. Although Henkel prominently mentioned Schober and Storch in his writings, his principal attack was at the doctrine and actions of Synod, but with little mention of Andrew Hoyl. As Storch and Schober were the Synod's leaders, they, by reference, were the primary targets of the majority of the assaults, with Schober bearing the brunt. From Henkel:

What man of common sense would suffer himself to be judged by the lawless? . . . But this assembly, sometime after the constitution was denied, owned it again; yet they never recalled the former illegal transactions of April, 1819. They were so far from it that they proposed to ratify said transactions.

Since when has North-Carolina become so deplorably dependent on Pennsylvania, that she must break her own constitution to get into connexion [sic]? . . . It seems she must do evil, that good may come!²⁵⁷

Schober's language was even more personal. To illustrate how pastors of this era confronted their opponents in the printed media, the Schober pamphlet quite possibly presents ultimate perfection. Although the title of the book did not contain the name Henkel, on the cover was printed:

. . . Is evident throughout this whole pamphlet, to men of common understanding; and which, in this Review, is exposed to the inquiring ignorant only, whom he too successfully leads with bombastic nonsense and perversions of plain truth.²⁵⁸

Were the members of St. John's the "inquiring ignorant" to which Schober intended this remark? Or was this an effort to rally and unify Schober's own congregations? On the inside of the front cover is found the following anonymous language:

Collections Library, Perkins Library, Duke University.

255. *Carolinian Herald*, pp. 32-33. *N. C. Synod Minutes - 1820*, p. 18. In a handwritten manuscript which seems incomplete, Henkel stated "There would have been no need to publish these things in print, had this connection not first been published in their minutes, &c." Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, Accession No. 8653-c, Box 3.

256. Letter from Charles Storch to Gottlieb Schober, June 15, 1821, Schober Papers, Old Salem, Inc., Archives. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 49. *Schober's Review*.

257. *Carolinian Herald*, pp. 29, 31, partially cited from *N. C. Synod Minutes - 1820*, p. 11, sect. 12.

258. *Schober's Review*, cover page.

... but where so many absurdities, pompous bragging, low-bred billingsgate, scurrilous language, scandalous comparisons, perversions of the truth, libelous charges, and meanness throughout, are dished up for the digestion of the unwary, who are not able to detect poison without assistance, I could not help, for their sake, disagreeable as the task is, to review the performance259

One page later is the prominent title:

DAVID HENKEL

followed by an additional string of insults:

Do not think that for your sake I reluctantly address you, for seven years' experience proves you incorrigible. . . . and you always bring up irritable stuff, only to keep a ferment against your seniors. . . . You will take notice, however, that I shall hereafter disdain to take notice of any thing you may say or do against me personally. . . . But it is understood who stirred the whirl of the mudpuddle. . . . But what a crooked soul must such a being have; what a crooked Bishop to guide the flock of Christ. . . . This shows why the book [Carolinian Herald] was written for, viz: to increase disturbance, and make the Lutherans and Reformed to remain at variance, and one brother to differ from his neighbor. . . . If you have the sense of a human being, you must know that your conditions are beneath notice. . . . I do wish that another spirit than the one which inspired you to write such twisted nonsense, would open your eyes, to show you that you are standing on the brink of a gulph [sic], and that the holy spirit, with whom you say you are sealed in baptism, may return to you, show you your depravity, the enormity of your acting as a leader of souls without authority or sign of grace, and make you so ashamed of yourself as to hide your face from man, until you, by tears of repentance, humbled yourself before Jesus, whom you have betrayed; and then not rest until you receive the assurance of his forgiveness, and the spirit that you are a child of God. . . . Your preaching will then be influenced by the spirit, and not the letter of the word of God only. . . .260

Schober concluded his counter-attack as follows:

I have now drudged through the mire, am quite tired of it, and afraid of such a lasting impression as will prevent any cordial union between me and him, and his honest readers and him. Had he shown any sign of humility, or only a distant confession of having acted improperly, freely ought he to be forgiven on true amendment, and every thing might before now have been buried in oblivion; but when, instead of confessing errors, he boldly increaseth in malice, in telling stories, and acting in all respects as a reprobate, surrendering his talents to satanic powers, and with them continues, with renovated strength, to cause bitterness to be established in congregations of Christians, there is no hope left. G. SHOBER261

Regarding alliance with the General Synod, Schober described the advantages that the larger body could obtain in formation of seminaries and missions, and assistance of ministers' widows and poor ministers.²⁶² Henkel disagreed as follows:

I have reasons to believe, that the plan was not maturely contemplated by all who voted for it. . . . But many of those pretenders to Lutheranism are void of Lutheran principles; they only denominate themselves through improper motives.²⁶³

Regarding the General Synod's newly adopted ordination practice requiring three years of study under an ordained Pastor, Henkel had a few thoughts:

A wealthy person might afford to pursue this course, notwithstanding he still might remain a coxcomb; yet because he has studied three years with an ordained minister, he is entitled to pastoral ordination; whereas, the most illustrious genius, highly improved, and living in a

259. *Ibid*, p. 2.

260. *Ibid*, pp. 3, 6, 8, 17, 29, 35, 40, 41.

261. *Ibid*, p. 41.

262. *Ibid*, p. 14.

263. *Carolinian Herald*, pp. 2-3.

remote corner, nor ordained minister near him, nor having the means to go far abroad, he cannot become a pastor, but must forever remain contracted in his usefulness.²⁶⁴

Schober critically defended this practice's purpose:

The general synod will, by its delegated authority, prevent one drinking-person from ordaining another bread-seeker in that line, and from being called a Lutheran minister, as it was the case forty years ago, to the disgrace of our Church, and which now seems to creep in again, although in another shape.²⁶⁵

Henkel repeated certain of his doctrinal positions, to which Schober responded:

David may go there [to the General Synod], if he is a Lutheran minister, and hear advice about his doctrine respecting the human presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, respecting his sin-forgiving power, &c. But our synod may also complain of such creatures as David.²⁶⁶

And finally, defending the principle of religious liberty, and separation of Church and State, Henkel was forceful in his language:

The establishment of a national church is in view; not only by some of the Lutherans, but also of the other denominations. . . . Such a national Synod might draw the chords of ministers closer together, make their temporal interests common, increase their influence, magnify their grandeur, and, by degrees, be established by civil authority. . . . Americans! I cannot conclude without alarming you a little more, that our liberty is endangered. . . . General synods, clandestine societies under a good garb, and the worshippers of monarchy and political religion, are so many instruments by which the Dragon may rear his throne of despotism, and once more deluge the world with blood.²⁶⁷

Soon after the 1821 North Carolina Synod meeting, Pastor Jacob Scherer of Rowan County contacted Paul Henkel, and requested that he come to peace with them, with certain stipulations. Paul did not answer him, as Paul was not certain whether Scherer acted upon his own authority, or upon the request of others.²⁶⁸

Henkel's "honest readers" at St. John's continued to support him. On October 22 of 1821, John Smith of Lincoln County was present at the meeting of the Tennessee Synod, and St. John's was a member of the new Synod on or before this meeting. Jacob Lutz accompanied Smith from School-House Church, Lincoln County, and Peter Boger, from Rocky River, Cabarrus County. Reverend Daniel Moser, also serving Lincoln County, "expresses his regret that he cannot attend this meeting of Synod, but hopes to be able to be present at some other time, indicating that he cannot continue in connection with the North Carolina Synod unless it takes a better position." His other reason for not attending were his "domestic circumstances" (*meinen häuslichen Umständen*). John Smith and Jacob Lutz were included in the committee to compile and print objections to the General Synod.²⁶⁹

264. *Ibid.*, p. 9. Henkel described the precise condition of the area west of the Catawba between 1814 and 1820 – no ordained Pastor.

265. *Schober's Review*, pp. 9-10. This is the most perfect innuendo recognized in either book. Was Schober accusing Philip of being an alcoholic?

Was Schober suggesting that David was both a bread-seeker and alcoholic? Or was he actually referring to an improper ordination forty years earlier? If so, was this Arends' ordination? Lack of details and documentation makes both books suspect as sources for true historical information. What did the contemporary reader think when he read this sentence?

266. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

267. *Carolinian Herald*, pp. 15, 17, 19, 65.

268. Letter from Paul Henkel to David Henkel, 18 August 1821, Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Gettysburg, PA.

269. Henkel, pp. 44-45. Morgan, p. 76. Past historians have stated that St. John's aligned with the Tennessee Synod in 1824. This cannot be ascertained by the Synod Minutes, as usually, the churches are not listed. The presence of Elders John Smith and Jacob Lutz indicate that St. John's and School-House Church were the first two to align with the new Synod. The appointment of Smith and Lutz to a committee is fairly conclusive evidence that the two churches immediately followed David Henkel to the Tennessee Synod. Further contact between Henkel and Smith in the next few months ascertains this alliance. No mention is found in the NC Synod Minutes of the withdrawal of St. John's; however, absence of delegates from the next several years' meetings corroborates that St. John's was a member of the Tennessee Synod. Letter from Daniel Moser to Philip Henkel, (German) 15 September 1821, Alderman Library, UVA, 8653-h, Box 1, Folder 1821-1847. Moser's

The infant Tennessee Synod mercilessly attacked the General Synod, composed of the Lutheran Synods in the states of Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland and Virginia, and North Carolina. "The Objections of the Committee Against the Constitution of the General Synod" was published with the primary complaints being its failure to include a confessional statement.²⁷⁰ This accusation was well-founded, as the General Synod refused to recognize the Augsburg Confession, and one of its founders declared that he "would suffer both his hands to be burned off before he would subscribe to the Formula of Concord."²⁷¹

Other "objections" included synodical regulation by the majority of votes rather than scriptures, synodical consent for a Church's use of books or liturgy, synodical government, synodical judicial powers, creation of a treasury, etc., etc., etc.. The transfer of power from the Church to the majority of votes of the Synod, and creation of a bureaucracy were of primary concern. This document was appended to the synodical minutes and its signatories included St. John's Elder, John Smith.²⁷² Although the pamphlet and letters were authorized by the Synod, their principal author is apparent. The Tennessee Synod felt that its basis of faith was beyond the severest criticisms of the older and more established Lutheran organizations of the era, and its truly-Lutheran "wake-up call" resounded up the eastern seaboard.

While *Carollian Herald* contained several pages on the Lord's Supper, in 1822 and upon request, David Henkel published his confessionally-based Lutheran beliefs on the other sacrament -- *Heavenly Flood of Regeneration, or A Treatise on Holy Baptism*. It gained no esteem from other denominations and only a few Lutherans outside the local area. A few years later, a copy of this pamphlet fell into the hands of Methodist Pastor Joseph Moore, V. D. M., from "a friend near Lincolnton, N. C.," Moore took exception to Henkel's doctrines, and published a response espousing the Methodist views. Henkel's beliefs were described as "wild and extravagant, so far from the truth, and even reason itself." As Henkel had scripturally connected God's command, His name, the Word, and Spirit to the sacramental water or to baptism, Moore combined these references and described this idea as "absurd; because it embraces the doctrine of consubstantiation, which is but very little better than the Popish doctrine of transubstantiation." "Consubstantiation" means the combining of Christ's body into the sacramental element, and "transubstantiation" indicates that Christ's body transforms entirely into the element. Neither term usually applies to Holy Baptism, but rather to Holy Communion, yet "consubstantiation" was Rev. Moore's evaluation of Henkel's doctrine on baptism. Where Henkel relied on the Scriptural phrases, "believe and be baptized," and "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit," Moore countered with a citation from the Book of Acts, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." The remainder of the arguments are similar. Upon encouragement and assistance from his father-in-law, Henkel defended the Lutheran teachings with a follow-up publication entitled *Answer to Mr. Joseph Moore, Methodist, etc.* As the nature of the sacraments was often a stumbling-block towards unionism, Henkel had now placed his confessionally-based doctrine into English for all to read, and this caused the Tennessee Synod to distinguish itself drastically from all other Lutheran Synods.²⁷³

The 1822 Tennessee Synod meeting was attended by delegates from Costner's Church, Lincoln County, and Rocky River Church, Cabarrus County. Many Tennessee Synod congregations, however, preferred unity and accord with the North Carolina Synod rather than schism. Daniel Moser, not yet a member of the Tennessee Synod, presented a letter to this effect.

attachment to the new Synod has been questioned by past historians. He uses the phrase "our church" ("unsere Kirche"), and requests that the next Tennessee Synod meeting be held in Lincoln.

270. *Tennessee Synod Re-Organized Minutes*, 1872. "Objections" was originally published in the Tennessee Synod Minutes, but the copy read was attached to this pamphlet.

271. Graebner, p. 328. Schober is credited with unsuccessful attempts to persuade the General Synod to recognize the Augsburg Confession. This is not surprising, as the Moravians recognized this writing.

272. *Tennessee Synod Re-Organized Minutes*, 1872.

273. *Carollian Herald*. David Henkel, *Heavenly Flood of Regeneration or A Treatise on Holy Baptism*, (Bingham & White, Salisbury, 1822), p. 22. Joseph Moore, *Strictures on a Piece Written by Mr. David Henkel, Pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Lincoln County, N. C., Entitled Heavenly Flood of Regeneration or Treatise on Holy Baptism*, (Lemuel Bingham, Catawba Journal Office, Charlotte, 1825). Preface, pp. 9, 22. David Henkel, *Answer to Mr. Joseph Moore, Methodist, With a few fragments on the Doctrine of Justification*, (S. Henkel, New Market, Virginia, 1825). Letter from Peter Hoyle to David Henkel, June 18, 1825, David Henkel Papers, Abbel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA, which speaks of a "Mr. B. with his budget of Methodism." The only other Synod with any support of the Tennessee Synod's positions was the Ohio Synod, where Henkel's brothers were affiliated.

A letter from Rev. Daniel Moser, in which he states his inability to be present, his desire that the next session of Synod be held in North Carolina, giving assurance that it would prove satisfactory to the people, that it might tend to healing the breach hitherto existing, and that Rev. Philip Henkel be requested to visit the congregations.

With respect to this letter, it was resolved, that if Rev. Mr. Moser had given some positive information as to whether he has absented himself from the General Synod, Synod could give him a more satisfactory answer, but in view of the present aspect of things, it can make no definite reply, further than that it desires him to come to some decisive conclusion as soon as possible.²⁷⁴

Yet "healing the breach" was not forthcoming, as North Carolina Synod President Storch had once stated that any reunion "must be on honorable terms" and "not be prescribed by such a fellow [David Henkel], but by conference."²⁷⁵

Acting on Moser's and other requests, David Henkel composed a lengthy, but firm, letter of reconciliation, wherein he repeated many of his ideas, disagreements, and beliefs. Perhaps the choice of Henkel was ill-advised; nevertheless, he offered himself to be examined by the North Carolina Synod in accordance with the Bible, the Confessions, and the Constitution. If he were found in error, he offered to repent, and it was the Synod's duty to forgive him. Similarly, if he could prove that the Synod's actions were contrary to these writings, Synod would repent, and he was bound by the Word of God to tender his forgiveness. Peace and harmony could be then be restored. He suggested that past actions be examined with confession and forgiveness, that doctrinal issues be guided by the Bible, Unaltered Augsburg Confession, and Luther's Catechism, and that the General Synod constitution be compared to Biblical teachings.²⁷⁶

Regarding the alliance with the General Synod, David Henkel was adamant:

If ye can prove the constitution of your General Synod to be a good and Divine institution, I will not oppose it again & shall submit thereunto without hesitation. But in case ye cannot prove your general constitution by the Bible, ye shall then be bound not to impose it on any person nor require any one to be governed there by [sic]. . . . Neither shall ye bind any congregations to it, but let every one enjoy Christian liberty. . . . Hitherto, ye have not produced a single syllable [sic] from the Bible in your constitution. Neither have ye asked the people whither the[y] would submit to your human traditions.²⁷⁷

In conclusion:

Sirs, these are fair proposals, and if ye will condescend [sic] to accept them, peace will then be restored unto the church and brotherly love will once more cement us. But if ye dispise [sic] them & ridicule me, do it at your own expense. Yet in all probability the consequences may be more serious than ye imagine. If I am wrong it is your duty to manifest my error agreeable to rule or else do not vilify me as a false teacher. If a schism remains in the church I am not to blame when I have offered unto you to make the decision by the Word of God.²⁷⁸

This letter was addressed to "The Rev. Jacob Sherrer, Secretary of the Lutheran Synod of North-Carolina, so called." Elder Peter C. Boger, from Rocky River Church in Cabarrus County, carried this letter to the Synod meeting held at Pilgrim Church in Rowan County. Mr. Charles Grime hand-carried a German version. Schober and Storch were offended by the term "so-called" in the address, rejected the letter without vote of the assembly, and instructed the couriers to return it to its sender. Boger refused to accept the letter, and Schober laid it on the table. One delegate suggested that the letter be left on the table, "until the conference was over; and then lie there, and then let the rats, or birds, or whatever wished, take it." Pastor Dreher agreed. Schober proclaimed that "it was

274. Henkel, pp. 50-51. Letter from Daniel Moser to Philip Henkel, (German), 29 September 1822, Alderman Library, UVA, 8653-h, Box 1, Folder 1821-1847. Moser's legitimate excuse was that he was called to be in Lincoln County Court on the exact same date as the Synod Meeting.

275. Letter from Storch to Schober, June 15, 1821.

276. Letter from David Henkel to North Carolina Synod, April 26, 1822, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. Punctuation was added for clarity.

277. *Ibid.*

278. *Ibid.*

too much honor for the letter to lie on the table, but that it should lie under it." The letter did not receive official response of Synod, although David Henkel was described in the Minutes as "no minister of the Lutheran Church," and that "he has desecrated the Holy Sacraments, and he ceases not to spread out blasphemies and lies." Henkel's followers "all spread untruths knowing that they are such," and were accused of teaching the "wrong doctrine about Baptism." "Woe unto them that seek to do harm."279

The North Carolina Synod, or possibly just one of its members, prompted further actions after the meeting. In summer of 1822, Andrew Hoyl's 1820 article from the *Raleigh Star* was "republished and circulated," causing persons not familiar with the case to suspect the character of David Henkel anew. Elder Peter C. Boger took personal offense to this action, as he had been publicly embarrassed by this Synod at its last meeting. He, with sanction and "approbation" of Rocky River's Elders, George Hartsel and Jacob Long, published his own handbill entitled, *The Wrongfully Persecuted, Defended*, in which Boger laid forth to the public the Synod's refusal of Henkel's letter and defended Henkel's character to the utmost. He attacked the Synod for its repetition of the unproven charges, for which they had been unwilling to allow a fair, public, "lawful hearing."280 A few of Boger's comments seem to represent the feelings of many of Henkel's supporters:

Is it not reasonable, that they [Synod] should have given Mr. Henkel an opportunity of proving his charges? If he had failed in so doing, then they would have had some shadow of condemning the direction of the letter. Could the synod reasonably have expected that Mr. Henkel should have positively acknowledged them Lutherans on the back of the letter, when he says, and is ready to prove, that they are no Lutherans? In short, can they expect that he should have contradicted himself? One should think, if this body of ministers knew themselves to be Lutherans, they would be willing to prove themselves as such when they are challenged to do so, and when they are impeached as not being genuine.

. . . From what I can learn, the persecutions against Mr. Henkel originated from an extreme aversion to the doctrines he promulgates, which are contrary to the doctrines exhibited by some other denominations. His doctrines are also most grossly misrepresented.

It is a contradiction for this body of ministers to exhort their people to forgive one another, when they themselves will neither forgive nor receive forgiveness. On supposition that Mr. Henkel had wronged them seventy times seven in one day, they, if they acted agreeably to the Gospel, would forgive him, when he is willing to be tried. How can they, without being self-condemned, pray the Lord's Prayer, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us," when they will not forgive their brother? What signify all pretensions to religion and brotherly union, when the heart is destitute of love and forgiveness?281

Some of Boger's allegations were refuted within the text of the following North Carolina Synod Minutes, by a committee of Storch, Schober, Jacob Scherer, Paul Barringer, and J. W. Walton. This discrepancy was noted by Beaver Dam Elder, Jacob Aderhold, and he advised Boger that he believed Boger's statements to be true. Aderhold stated, "I know that it is easy for some of them to deny a truth, in order to screen themselves from open shame and disgrace. My advice to you as a friend, is to spare no pains in vindicating the truth, and defending the innocent."282

Boger then garnered a certificate dated December 7, 1822, signed by eight witnesses, attesting to his 1822 presentation of David Henkel's letter to the N. C. Synod. Synodical statements were termed "incorrect, and a downright falsity." He then challenged the committee to meet him at Pilgrim's Church, Rowan County, whereby he would prove his statements correct "by a greater number of reputable persons." Upon failure of the Synod to attend, "the public then can make the decision, whose statements are correct." Boger then distributed a statement named *Plain Truth Vindicated*, wherein he repeated the events of the 1822 North Carolina Synod meeting, defended David Henkel, and ostracized Schober and Storch for the transactions from 1820 through 1822. If Schober still believed that there had not been a constitution at the 1820 meeting, "would there not a fraud have been practiced upon the public [by the sales of the *Luther* pamphlet]?"

279. Boger, Peter C., *The Wrongfully Persecuted, Defended*, publisher unknown, July 29, 1822, p. 1. This document appears to be a printed handbill to be posted in public locations. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, pp. 54-56.

280. *The Wrongfully Persecuted, Defended*.

281. *Ibid*.

282. Peter C. Boger, *Plain Truth Vindicated*, typed transcription, original source unknown, to which is attached a letter from Jacob Aderhold, dated 1 Jan. 1823, pp. 7-8. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 57.

After you were made to own your falsehood, did you not wish that the church would forgive you? But were you willing to forgive Mr. Henkel? You were not even willing that he should have a constitutional trial, to ascertain whether he was guilty, because you never ruled him to trial by the constitution. Mr. Henkel must be degraded by you and your associates. But even if you can lie, you are made president.

Shober, you, together with your associates in the committee, in your late publication say, "that satan is the father of lies"; "and that we can not honor such people as disciples of Christ, who knowingly propagate lies, and make of white lies", etc.

Very well, Shober! Satan is the father of lies; but remember Lincolnton, where you denied the ratified constitution of the synod and blush!²⁸³

Boger continued to defend David Henkel's ordination and attacked Schober and the North Carolina Synod for their perpetuation of false reports. Unkind personal attacks against Schober were included:

You brought an action of slander against Col. John Martin in 1810, for saying that you had marked your name to a suit against one B. Childress, and suffered a judgment [sic] by default, for the purpose of oppressing your client; and for saying that you were a hog thief; for saying that you had ordered a man to kill a hog, and when the man had brought it, it had not your mark, and that you ordered it to be put in the collar, and said that no body would be the wiser. And further, for saying that you were connected with the counterfeiters, Collins & Twitty, and that you had rented them the paper mill in the year 1792 or 1793. Which suit was by your affidavit removed to another county, and which suit you had dismissed.

Shober, if the copy of the above statement be true, it seems that Col. Martin called you a hog thief, and said you had been connected with the counterfeiters, Collins and Twitty. But what was the reason after you had sued Col. Martin in reporting so of you, that you dismissed the suit? What made you so gracious towards friend Col. Martin, as to dismiss the suit? It is certainly very hard to be called a hog thief, and to be reported as being connected with counterfeiters, as that must be a very mean profession.²⁸⁴

Boger also alerted the public to a land transaction involving Schober and Mr. Timothy Pickering, allowing them to wonder as to its propriety. He concluded by insinuating that the North Carolina Synod, the General Synod, and the Episcopal Diocese might not wish to "take seats in Shober's connection." Boger labeled these associations as "Shober's club."²⁸⁵

St. John's member, John Moretz, then traveled to Guilford County with this publication, and read it in several congregations, thus serving to arouse some of the predominantly North Carolina Synod congregations. Two congregations responded with a publication of their own, which defended their pastor Jacob Scherer and discounted Boger's handbill as "a downright falsehood" which was "calculated to prejudice the minds of the people." They further stated that the Synod Committee of 1822 "had written the truth concerning the same" and were "wrongfully accused." Members from the Abbot's Creek congregation in Davidson County further charged Boger with "denying the truth, and reporting of falsehoods." These responses did not specifically address nor defend a single one of Boger's accusations as "falsities," "falsehoods," or wrongful accusations, nor did they deny the treatment of David Henkel's letters.²⁸⁶

283. *Plain Truth Vindicated*, pp. 1-4.

284. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6. Response by Schober could not be located in his personal papers, but it is highly likely that he did respond. The counterfeiting operation was run by Abraham Collins of the western edge of Lincoln County and Allen Twitty, who lived about ten miles north of Rutherfordton. They printed and distributed counterfeit currency and bank notes in transactions of thousands of dollars each, and these were spread throughout the southeast and as far north as New England. At the first court trial, one of the witnesses stated that Schober, who owned a paper mill, had sold them special paper which aided the deception. Schober wrote a letter to Governor James Turner in April of 1805, and stated that he did not know the paper was to be used for counterfeiting. No charges are known to have been filed against Schober, and he was elected State Senator a few years later. Collins and Twitty eventually were re-tried in the North Carolina Supreme Court in 1822 and 1824 (the same time period as the Boger handbill). See Kenneth Spears, "Counterfeiting in Rutherford and Lincoln Counties," *Bulletin of the Genealogical Society of Old Tryon County*, Vol. XVI, Nos. 1 & 2, pp. 2-15, 70-82, for more details on the local counterfeiting operation.

285. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7. The Pickering land case resulted in \$3000 in damages against Schober see Surratt pp. 177-178..

286. Publication from "Elders of the Rev. Jacob Sherer's congregation" and "Subscribers, living . . . near Pilgrim's church," 31 May 1823 and 26 June 1823. Copy from NCLSA, 1.0.1, Folder #3. The first letter was from those who were present when Moretz read the letter, and the second was from a group who were present at the Synod meeting of 1822. This publication is in very careful language which supported the committee report of the 1822 Synod meeting, but did not engage in a discussion on a single one of Boger's allegations.

By 1822, grounds for further division of the North Carolina Synod were brewing in South Carolina. One young pastor had been doctrinally challenged by Schober and Storch over the subject of Christ's descent into hell (*Höllenfahrt Christi*). The Synod threatened to reduce him in rank or remove him from the ministry completely. When word of this reached New Market, David Henkel was advised to contact the disgruntled young pastor, and others from South Carolina, in order to more closely affiliate with them.²⁸⁷ A meeting was held at David Henkel's house in April 1823, where Daniel Moser, and South Carolina pastors, Godfrey Dreher and Samuel Hersher reached an agreement. Pastor Hersher emerged and delivered public declarations against the General Synod at Costner's Church the following two days.²⁸⁸

At the ensuing North Carolina Synod meeting, an unusual event occurred. Gottlieb Schober was elected neither to President nor Secretary. When Storch became President, he declined to serve in that capacity; hence, Schober became President Pro Tem. The South Carolina contingent of Godfrey Dreher, Samuel Hersher, and Michael Rauch "declined taking a seat or vote." Possibly this action was in accordance with the meeting at Henkel's house, and their delegates were not seated either. A friendly correspondence followed between Henkel and Dreher, although they disagreed as to the possible benefits or detriments of the General Synod. A meeting was arranged for November of 1823.²⁸⁹ David Henkel visited South Carolina churches in Lexington, Newberry, and Chesterfield Counties at that time, and reported that "the Ministers there are done with Shober and his partie [sic]." In January 1824, Dreher called together Hersher plus four others Pastors (including Daniel Moser's brother, Jacob), and organized the South Carolina Synod, thus further depleting the ranks of the North Carolina Synod. One of the published reasons for forming a separate synod was the "fulminating pamphlets" that had begun to disrupt some South Carolina congregations -- but there were obviously other reasons that were closer to the real truth. The North Carolina Synod, under the various presidencies of Storch, Schober, and Jacob Scherer, had been reduced from a high of twenty-six servants in 1819, to only six pastors, two candidates, and two catechists by 1825. By this time, the Tennessee Synod included at least eight pastors and a few other deacons and/or applicants.²⁹⁰

Very possibly these conditions caused the 1823 North Carolina Synod to appoint a committee to contact Paul Henkel, in an attempt at reconciliation. Rev. Daniel Scherer composed a letter which he sent to Rev. Paul Henkel. The letter claimed common Lutheran doctrinal ground with the Tennessee Synod specifically mentioning the Augsburg Confession, the Lord's Supper, and Baptism. This attempt to address the doctrinal chasm did not succeed. No known response from Paul Henkel has been discovered. A year later, the North Carolina Synod determined that the senior Henkel "offered nothing which could be acceptable for union," without elaboration of Henkel's terms.²⁹¹

Paul was satisfied that the Tennessee Synod was functioning properly, and that everyone was in peace.²⁹²

On September 6, 1824, David Henkel attended the Tennessee Synod meeting at Koiner's Church in Augusta County, Virginia. Reverend Daniel Moser was also in attendance, preached a sermon, and presented a petition which appears in the summary of this meeting as follows:

Rev. Daniel Moser, Lincoln County, North Carolina, having expressed a desire to be received into connection with this Synod, and a petition, number six, signed by three members of three of his congregations, testifying to his good moral conduct, and certifying that since

287. Letter from Paul Henkel to David Henkel, (German), 1 August 1822, Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Letter from Paul Henkel to David Henkel, (German), January ?1823?, cited above.

288. *David Henkel Diary*, 1823.

289. Letter from Godfrey Dreher to David Henkel, 21 May 1825, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

290. *David Henkel Diary*, 1823. Other attendees at the meeting at Henkel's house were laymen John Moritz, David Thronberg, and Nicholas Bucher. The presence of Moritz at this meeting suggests organization of St. Peter's, as he was their principal delegate a few years later. Letter from Philip Henkel to David Henkel, dated 16 February 1824, copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Bernheim & Cox, pp. 178, 188. Henkel, pp. 65-67. *S. C. Synod History*, pp. 156-160. Rev. H. E. Jacobs, D. D., "The History and Progress of the Lutheran Church in the United States," *First Free Lutheran Diet in America, Philadelphia, December 27-28, 1877*, p. 123, lists the total number of communicants in the NC Synod as 1147, in 1825. There were more than that in the Tennessee Synod in Lincoln County alone!

291. Daniel Scherer to Paul Henkel, 9 June 1823, German, NC Archives, NC Supreme Court File 1531. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, pp. 57-59. Morgan, p. 54.

292. Letter from Paul Henkel to David Henkel, January ?1823?, Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

1820 neither they nor their minister belonged to any synod, and asking to be received into Synod; and Rev. Moser, in writing over his own signature, stating that he regarded the doctrines maintained by the Tennessee Synod as in accord with the Augsburg Confession, it was resolved, that he and his congregations be received, and that he be recognized by Synod as one of its pastors.²⁹³

It is of little surprise that Moser was accepted, as he was an occasional supporter of the Henkels during the previous debates with the North Carolina Synod, was present at David Henkel's ordination, and was one of those present when the North Carolina Synod leaders left the meeting and re-convened at John Harry's Hotel in 1820. In 1821, he had presented a letter of excuse to the North Carolina Synod meeting. In the following two years, Moser did not attend the North Carolina Synod, and did not ask to be excused. No sooner was Moser received into the Tennessee Synod, than he was given additional work. Streams of requests were received by the young Synod for ministerial services, and it felt obligated to respond. Moser, along with Philip Henkel, David Henkel, Ambrose Henkel, and others were given the missionary assignments, and instructed to spend two months each in visiting these other areas.²⁹⁴

Further requests were made to attempt to reconcile with the North Carolina Synod. These came from Philadelphia congregation and St. John's Church. To answer these congregations, it was resolved that the doctrinal differences between the two Synods were to be prepared in writing. If the Tennessee Synod deviated from the traditional Lutheran principles, it would acknowledge these in writing and seek a reunion with the parent Synod.²⁹⁵

When the General Synod's meeting of 1824 suggested the possibility of conciliation, David Henkel sent a "Memorial" to the Synod of Virginia and Maryland, dated September 18, 1824. Its purpose was to address the reasons why unity was not possible under the circumstances. Henkel pointed out, that "some of the Lutheran ministers having deviated from the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession, is one of the principal reasons of discord." Then he became specific, and the members of the North Carolina Synod were "impeached for departing from the Lutheran doctrine." Henkel repeated the doctrinal differences, with references to the writings of the N. C. Synod. If the neighboring Synod would publicly disagree on the doctrinal positions of the North Carolina Synod, then their "honourable body" could "be justified, as not partaking with, & countenancing a connexion [sic] of men who are inimical to genuine Lutheranism." The constitution of the General Synod was discussed, with a list of questions relative to its intent. Henkel requested that the "young missionaries" be instructed to cease the rumors that he was not an ordained minister of the Gospel. "May the blessing of God, be with you all. Amen."²⁹⁶

Although the North Carolina Synod had agreed to react to David Henkel with "silence," someone was continuing to circulate reports against him. St. John's again came to Henkel's defense, after word reached Kentucky of Henkel's alleged impropriety as a Lutheran minister:²⁹⁷

St. John's Church, Lincoln County, N. C. April the 18th, 1825.

This is to certify, that the Rev'd David Henkel is and has been the regular minister of this Church for more than 10 years; his behaviour has been good. The church records being lodged with me, I hereby state that there are upwards of 200 persons in his communion, at one time or the other, and he receives an adequate support for his labours. Yesterday he administered the Lord's supper to a respectable number of citizens. Certified by

John Mouser
Treasurer of St. Johns Church²⁹⁸

293. Henkel, pp. 61.

294. Henkel, p. 63. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, pp. 49, 56.

295. Henkel, pp. 63-64. Rather than reconciliation, the congregations writing the petitions were more likely looking for a major "show-down."

296. David Henkel's Memorial, preferred to the Reverend Members of the Synod of Virginia and Maryland, pp. 3-7. Copy was obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

297. Peschau's *NC Synod Minutes*, p. 62.

298. Certificate from John Mouser about David Henkel, St. John's Treasurer, 18 April 1825. Copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Gettysburg Seminary.

To the Evangelical Lutheran brethren in Kentucky, and to all it may concern: This is to certify that the Revd David Henkel has been our regular minister at St Johns Church for more than ten years. His conduct been that of a Christian and a morale man, and further, a zealous minister of the gospel. He has from time to time been innocently persecuted like all faithfull [sic] servants of Christ, there was [sic] several charges broat [sic] against him by our foes. And all war [sic] found to be fals [sic]. We know not a word of harm against Mr. Henkel. He has alway [sic] large and respectable Congregation at this place, and a good support with pleasure. We subscribe.

Lincoln County, N. C.

{Christopher Sigman

April 17, 1825

{Frederick Hok[ink smear]}

Church Council ----

{David Sigman

{Moses Justice

{John Smith299

In response to the 1824 petitions for unity, including that from St. John's, little progress had been made. Frederick Hoke was the delegate at the 1826 Tennessee Synod, where it was decided that Revs. Adam Miller, Daniel Moser, and David Henkel announce a public meeting near Salisbury, unofficial home of the North Carolina Synod. Invited were Pastors Storch and Daniel Sherer, but others were also welcomed, to "preach on the disputed points of doctrine." When Henkel and Moser appeared at the appointed location, nobody from the North Carolina Synod was present. Members of area Churches then formed a "joint-committee for the purpose of regulating the internal government" of their congregations, who requested that another public meeting be announced. George Bowman and John Yount represented St. John's on this committee. Henkel and Moser then published a second announcement on December 10th, 1826:

To all whom it may concern.

BE IT KNOWN, that we intend to hold a publick [sic] meeting at St. Paul's church, which shall commence on the day after the session of the aforesaid Synod shall have adjourned, and be for the purpose as specified in the above address. Whether the members of the aforesaid North-Carolina Synod will agree or refuse to attend this meeting, we shall, notwithstanding, if God permit, hold the same, and speak during three days on the aforesaid topics [sic]. . . .

The invitation included accusations that the North Carolina Lutheran Synod doctrines did "not correspond with . . . the Holy Scriptures." The proposed debate rules stipulated that there be no interruptions while the other side was speaking, providing each speaker limit his discourse to two hours. It listed the topics, admonished the speakers to not deviate from the subject matters, and placed the Lutheran confessions squarely as the reference of debate. If these were found to be in error, appeal could be made "exclusively to the Holy Scriptures." Under these conditions, the Tennessee Synod offered reconciliation. This letter was signed by Daniel Moser and David Henkel.³⁰⁰

At the outset of the North Carolina Synod meeting of 1827, St. Paul's member, Michael Rudisill, hand delivered this letter. To avoid any dispute over the term "so-called," this letter was addressed "to the Rev. Charles A. Storke, G. Shober, Jacob Sherer, and Daniel Sherer, and all other Ministers belonging to their Synod." Before the meeting, one pastor was reported to have stated that "it was not only improper, but also sinful to argue publicly [sic] on religious subjects." On Tuesday, Rudisill requested a response to the letter, and on Wednesday,

299. Certificate from St. John's Church to the Evangelical Lutheran Brethren in Kentucky, 17 April 1825. Copy from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA.

300. Daniel Moser and David Henkel, letter entitled To the Lutheran Joint Committee of this County, 10 Dec. 1826, pp. 2-4, with copy obtained from Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. This was also published in TN Synod Minutes in a later year.

he repeated his plea. None came forth, no reasons were given, and Henkel viewed this inaction as "silent contempt." Synod adjourned, and its members departed.³⁰¹

May 10, 1827 might have been one of the most exciting days in the early annals of Catawba County, when dogmatic local stalwarts, David Henkel and Daniel Moser, appeared at St. Paul's as announced, and were ready, willing, and able to publicly confront the leaders of the North Carolina Lutheran Synod. When there was no opposition, the members of St. Paul's requested them to address a few of the disputed points. Henkel complied, and the one-sided debates were adjourned. A committee of twelve, including Chairman Christopher Siegman, John Smith, and George Bowman from St. John's, was formed to write a report on these proceedings. The committee requested the Tennessee Synod Secretary, David Henkel, to prepare a treatise, defending the propriety and scriptural grounds for the debates which did not occur.³⁰²

Henkel's finely-honed pen was again removed from its scabbard:

It is also to be observed that the Tennessee Synod impeach them with having deviated from the Lutheran confession of faith, and propagating doctrines under the covert of Lutheranism, which are erroneous.

Whereas, . . . the ministers of the N. Carolina Synod have refused to come to a constitutional trial, it has hitherto been impossible to heal this breach.³⁰³

Henkel's treatise adamantly defended the Lutheran confessions, and challenged the North Carolina Synod to prove them false. If their pastors did not believe and teach from these confessions, why did they "call themselves Lutherans"? "How is it possible that people can with any degree of safety, be in connexion [sic] with such ministers, as are publicly [sic] impeached with erroneous doctrines: and yet are not willing to be brought to light!" Henkel accused them of possessing "the pride of the Devil," and of exalting "themselves above their fellow-man." He referred to Schober as "a dangerous man" for the past allegations that Henkel taught "the most dangerous heresies," and defended several of these doctrinal points by reference to his own writings. In defense of the debate format, Henkel cited Biblical encounters between Christ and the Pharisees, the Sadducees, a lawyer, and the Devil himself, as examples that ministers should "bear with the wicked, and to reason with, instead of persecuting them." Although David Henkel offered to amend the personal differences between himself and Schober through "reciprocal forgiveness," he later referred to Schober as a "calumniator," or "one who bears false witness against his neighbor," for Schober's failure to prove his allegations by legal testimonies. Henkel concluded:

As some of the friends of the N. Carolina Synod wish to find fault with every invitation and proposition from us, I would ask why then have [sic] not the Synod made some propositions to us for a publick [sic] reciprocal debate? Would it not have been their duty, as well as our's to have made an offer? How unreasonable it is for any one to find fault with our invitations, when it is manifest that our opponents do not attempt to give us any!³⁰⁴

Any remote chance of synodical union was now entirely laid to rest.

St. Paul's was host to the North Carolina Synod in May 1827, as it, with Salem and Grace, had petitioned the North Carolina Synod for "visiting preachers" a year earlier, and had offered their facilities for future meetings. At this meeting, the three congregations petitioned for a full-time pastor. By 1828, Rev. Henry Graeber, who had transferred from the Lutheran Synod of Maryland and Virginia, took charge of congregations at these and other local churches, and reported 45 communicants in six congregations. This parochial report provided opportunity

301. *Report of the Transactions of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized, During its 7th Session, Held in St. James' Church, Greene County, Tenn., from Monday the 18th, to Wednesday the 20th of September, 1854*, (Lyon & Co.'s Job Office, Greenville, 1855), pp. 17-18. Although this account was printed in the Tennessee Synod's Minutes of 1828, a later re-publication was available to the author, as obtained from Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia. Other members of the committee include: Michael Rudisill, John Probst, and Caspar Bolich, from St. Paul's; Paul Hertzog and Jacob Weaver, from Zion; Lewis Leinberger and Jacob Costner from Philadelphia; John Moritz from St. Peter's; and Adam Seagel from Trinity church (Vale). Of Catawba County's early Lutheran Churches, only Grace is not represented on this committee.

302. *Ibid.*

303. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

304. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-32.

for renewal of editorial commentary in the North Carolina Synod Minutes, although David Henkel was not serving the three named congregations:

These churches have for some years been very much harassed and injured by the unprecedented conduct of a certain individual and his adherents, who have occasioned discord and division in many congregations. But there are still a considerable and respectable number of persons who are the warm friends of *truth*, and are zealously engaged in fighting the good fight of faith. The preaching of the gospel is generally well attended.³⁰⁵

Division at Old St. Paul's was confirmed at the Tennessee Synod meeting of 1828, which was held on September 8, at the same site. The Constitution of the Tennessee Synod was "critically examined" and "unanimously adopted and ratified" at this meeting, and it was attached to the minutes. The signers of the constitution include Philip Henkel, David Henkel, Daniel Moser, Adam Miller, Jr., and St. John's lay-delegates Frederick Hoke, Esq., Bernhart Sigman, Philip Hetrick, Henry Schuck, and thirty-five other pastors or laymen.³⁰⁶

Under the new Constitution, separation of the two Lutheran bodies, operating side by side in North Carolina, often in the same churches, was destined to continue for nearly a century.

One dispute eventually landed in Stokes County Superior Court, with a notice being filed in 1825 or earlier. By 1827, Gottlieb Schober, as agent of the North Carolina Synod, sued Henkel for default in payment for books. The case was finally heard on Wednesday, April 18, 1828, and Schober was awarded \$140.00 in damages on his home turf.³⁰⁷

A second legal case arose due to ownership and use of Church property at Organ Church in Rowan County. Adherents of the North Carolina and General Synod locked the doors against the Tennessee Synod congregation and its selected pastors, which were often Daniel Moser and David Henkel. After a process in the Rowan Court system, the decision was appealed. Without delving into the details of the case, the issues involved land ownership, departing from Lutheran doctrine and the Augsburg Confession, the General Synod method of church government, the validity of David Henkel's ordination, Organ Church's rules, and several other points of contention. Essentially, the entire Lutheran debate was aired in Rowan Court. The Tennessee Synod plaintiffs requested that depositions be obtained from LAYMEN of St. John's. How could laymen of St. John's be involved in this issue? The following are direct quotations from the depositions of a St. John's Elder, and reflect the opinion of the entire congregation:

Question 1st: Do you or do you not believe that there is a difference between the Doctrine taught & propagated by Doctor Martin Luther and that taught by the members of the Lutheran Synod of North Carolina.

Answer: I do believe there is a difference.

Question 2nd: How long have you been a member of the Lutheran Church

Answer: I have been a member of Sd. Church between thirty five & forty years

Question 3rd: Do you or do you not believe that the General Synod is a departure from the doctrines of Doctor Martin Luther.

Answer: I do believe the General Synod, is a departure from the Doctrines of Doctor Martin Luther.

Question 4th: How long have you been acquainted with David Henkel as a preacher

Answer: I have attended his preaching between eight & ten years--

Question 5th: Do you or do you not believe that David Henkel has & does preach & support the Evangelical Lutheran Doctrine--

305. *NC Synod Minutes, 1826*, p. 14. *NC Synod Minutes, 1827*, p. 8. *NC Synod Minutes, 1828*, pp. 8, 13. Forty-five communicants in six congregations indicates that this statement may contain more propaganda than truth, although Graeber was living locally. St. Paul's appears to be the largest congregation.

306. Henkel, p. 74. *Tennessee Synod Re-Organized Minutes, 1879*, p. 12. The four St. John's lay-persons were determined by comparison to the names on the St. John's petition above. The name "Henry Schuck" is often seen mis-transcribed as "Henry Schenk," as appears to be the case here. John Moretz signed the constitution for St. Peter's, and John Probst, possibly also from Catawba County. Some have contended that the Tennessee Synod did not officially exist until ratification of this constitution.

307. Stokes Minute Docket, Superior Court, 1807-1846, microfilm, N. C. State Archives, CR.090 30023. Other records of this court case cannot be located, but this is possibly an outstanding debt for payment of *Luther*, nearly ten years earlier. Letters from Hamilton C. Jones to David Henkel, dated 26 Dec. 1825, 1 Oct. 1826, and 30 Jan. 1827, Henkel Family Papers, Abdel Ross Wentz Library, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. Jones was Henkel's attorney, and a letter of agreement for \$10.00 for legal services was also included.

A second church leader was requested to verify the statements above. He made the following deposition:

The questions asked . . . & the answers made . . . are also the same answers he [the above deponent] makes to those questions excepting the 2nd question. He [this deponent] sayeth he has been a member of the Sd. Church for twenty or twenty two years.³⁰⁹

The Tennessee Synod laymen of Organ Church sought out two members of St. John's as "expert witnesses" on the doctrine of Martin Luther and the trend of the North Carolina Synod, to enter depositions **UNDER OATH** in their behalf **IN THE NORTH CAROLINA SUPREME COURT !** The names of the deponents are John Smith and Frederick K. Hoke, a farmer and a farmer/merchant. The justices receiving these statements were Frederick Hoke and Miles W. Abernathy (both in the community). Michael Rudisill, of St. Paul's congregation, was also included in this inquiry.³¹⁰

How many laymen of any church would be willing to make such statements to a similar forum of critics? The St. John's congregation was obviously well-schooled in the doctrinal distinctions existing in the 1820's -- to the point that they could be called as witnesses in an important legal case originating elsewhere.

By 1830, the emotions somewhat subsided, according to a report from Rev. Graeber in the North Carolina Synod Minutes: ". . . although there is discord and contentions throughout yet we enjoy an entire ecclesiastical peace, for which we have great reason to be thankful."³¹¹

Later historians reflected on the results of controversies:

It [Tennessee Synod] was a very small body. For twenty years it was composed of self-educated men, not one of whom had ever been graduated from either a college or theological seminary. The churches were scattered over four States, and were in the interior, not one being found in any city or large town. Yet this little body was called by Providence to be the custodian of the historic Lutheran faith in America. They were opposed and maligned by the denominations around them. They were misunderstood, misrepresented and denounced by Lutherans. They were stigmatized by opprobrious epithets. Lutheran synods in grave resolutions condemned them and warned the public against them. . . . They were looked upon as a sort of religious nondescript.³¹²

When the case is fully reviewed, beneath the personal motives which may have continued to the result, those connected with an important doctrinal divergence must be conceded. Paul Henkel, the pioneer missionary of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, and one of the founders of both the North Carolina and Ohio [and Tennessee] synods, and his four sons, were men of great force of character and depth of personal convictions. Without much learning of the schools, they were persevering students. The extremes to which measures were pressed in the South against which their traditional Lutheran spirit rebelled, drove them to the study of the old standards of the Lutheran Church, its confessions of faith, and the writings of Luther. They were as fearless and outspoken as they became firm in their conviction that the Lutheran Church in America had drifted from its moorings. Many of their earlier attempts may be criticised [sic] as ill-advised, as also their earlier literature falls beneath the tests of even a moderate standard of excellence. But time has vindicated their sincerity, earnestness, and the correctness of their judgment on not a few points upon which they were greeted with opposition and ridicule. They were, in the twenties, the most vigorous assailants of both the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and the General Synod. The formal questions addressed to the former, challenging its Lutheranism, were not deemed worthy of an answer. The constitution of the General Synod, it published with a commentary, not altogether fair and yet not altogether wrong.³¹³

308. John Smith Deposition, 16 Mar 1829 NC Archives, NC Supreme Court file 1531.

309. Frederick Hoke Deposition, *Ibid*.

310. *Ibid*.

311. *NC Synod Minutes, 1830*, p. 17. Graeber listed 100 communicants but did not list his congregations. A year later, he listed five congregations (1831, p. 8.). By 1835, Graeber had relocated, and NC Synod was serving these congregations with traveling pastors (1835, 1836, p. 12.).

312. Rev. Junius B. Fox, A. M., *Biography of Rev. Alfred J. Fox, M. D.*, (Philadelphia: 1885), pp. ix-x. This author and his father were members of the Tennessee Synod, and one may suspect bias.

313. Jacobs, pp. 393-394. This author was not involved in the dispute whatsoever. Many other historians outside of North Carolina could be similarly cited.

Many pages have been taken to describe the formation of the Tennessee Synod, and the intimate involvement of St. John's in these events. During this entire controversial period, Henkel maintained somewhat regular service to St. John's, and this relationship will be reviewed beginning in 1820, the year of the rupture.

Over forty newcomers to the Lutheran Church at St. John's were baptized by David Henkel, and the Lord's Supper continued to be administered. Henkel's March service must have been truly inspirational, as Henkel received \$22.00 compensation. During 1820, Henkel provided special Communion services for V. Eisenhaur (Aug. 13) and Baltzer Siegmann (Aug. 14), and baptized an infant for Bernhard Siegmann (Nov. 4).³¹⁴ But this year did not pass without further impact on the larger influence of the Lutheran Church.

One could imagine the night of August 23, 1820 was a typical, sultry, North Carolina night. The sky was dark, with a scattering of silver sparkles. The dirt road in front of the house was quiet. But the candle's glimmer softly shined through the windows well into the morning. Unknown to the chirping crickets outside, unknown to the St. John's congregation, unknown to the Lutherans west of the Catawba River, unknown to the future of Lutheran higher education in Catawba County, and unknown to the future Missouri Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, history was made that night.

The sounds inside the house were that of a mother in labor -- and at about 3:00 A. M., they were that of a crying infant. About five weeks later, the child was baptized and his given name was logged in his father's diary as "Cyprian Polycarp".³¹⁵ The house was that of Reverend David Henkel and his wife Catherine. "P. C." was the name the child would sign as an adult. In later years, this newborn had the opportunity to place his signature on baptismal, marriage, and confirmation certificates for many Lutherans of St. John's, and many, many signatures onto documents for other Lutheran families and congregations.

Continuing with more routine activities at St. John's, in 1821, the January service was not held due to weather. The remainder of the year's ecumenical activities included nine services, two of which were Communion. Thirty-nine were baptized. On August 8, a funeral service was delivered for John Eisenhour, possibly the elder who signed the petition a year earlier. After the yearly Synod meeting, Henkel took an extended missionary trip. His first appearance back in the area was on Saturday, December 8, when he spent the night with the John Smith family, and was likely collaborating on the response to the General Synod. The next day, Henkel preached at St. John's.³¹⁶

Pastor David Henkel conducted eleven services at St. John's in 1822, including two celebrations of Holy Communion, and thirty-one baptisms. Spring Communion, held in June, was also attended by visiting pastor Adam Miller from Tennessee, where he described the attendance as "a numerous collection of people." Henkel preached (in English) at the Tennessee Synod Meeting on October 22, 1822, to an overflowing crowd at Greene County, Tennessee. During this meeting, he was instructed to enter into a mission to various Lutheran interests in Indiana and Kentucky. Adam Miller was recommended to again visit Henkel's congregations. To avoid confusion, Adam Miller (Sr.) supplied only occasionally, and a few years later his nephew, identified as Adam Miller, Jr., became a regular pastor at St. John's.³¹⁷

Thirty-four St. John's baptisms were recorded by David Henkel in 1823. Ten sermons were delivered, including two Communion services. Two of the baptisms were for infants of Peter Hoke and John Huffman. On March 2, the day his son Socrates was born, Henkel confirmed a class of thirty-one students. On July 28, a funeral service was conducted for the infant son of John Hefner. Henkel's output in baptisms continued to exceed that of other Lutheran pastors in the area. He baptized 161 white infants and adults and 32 slaves in his various Lutheran congregations during this year, indicating that slavery was becoming more accepted within the local German culture.³¹⁸

314. *David Henkel Diary, 1820*. The \$22.00 possibly represented Henkel's yearly salary.

315. *Ibid*.

316. *Ibid*, 1821.

317. *Ibid*, 1822. Henkel, pp. 47-51. David Henkel, Report of the Transactions of the third German Evangelical Lutheran

Synod of Tennessee, etc., handwritten manuscript, Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, Accession No. 8653-c, Box C. Although not specifically stated, the manuscript is in Henkel's distinctive handwriting.

318. *David Henkel Diary, 1823*. Henkel, p. 55.

During the 1823 Tennessee Synod Meeting, David Henkel was again selected to provide missionary services to the Lutherans in Kentucky and Indiana during the spring or early summer of the following year.³¹⁹

Only six regular services were conducted by Henkel in 1824, as Henkel took a trip north from May until September, as directed by the Tennessee Synod. Reverend Daniel Moser, who was minister at the newly-formed St. Peter's Lutheran Church and lived in the neighborhood, was the most likely replacement during Henkel's absence; however, this cannot be verified with a current record. Communion was held in April and November of 1824, and 22 were baptized by Henkel, with possibly others by Moser. On November 6, a funeral sermon was delivered for George Smith (1794-1824), and in December, Henkel baptized 1 adult and four infants for the St. John's families of Moses Justice and Andrew Killian.³²⁰

At least four services were held between January and April of 1825, with the Lord's Supper being held in April. Nine baptisms and one confirmation were reported during this period. There is no mention in Henkel's diary for the last half of the year. Once again, he took an extended trip through Kentucky, Indiana, and other areas from May through August. On March 13, Henkel's son Cicero was baptized by Reverend Daniel Moser, with John Smith and wife as sponsors. With the Smiths being sponsors, in all likelihood Henkel had moved to the St. John's community by this time. Whether Daniel Moser supplied St. John's during this year is not known but is probable. A new congregation was in its infancy, as Henkel began to preach at John Miller's on December 2, and continued for several years.³²¹

On September 5, 1825, the sixth session of the Tennessee Synod was held at St. John's, Lincoln County, North Carolina. Prior to this, the meetings had been held in the following locations:

1st 1820 Solomon's Church, Cove Creek, Sullivan Co., Tennessee;

2nd 1821 Zion's Church, Sullivan Co., Tennessee;

3rd 1822 St. James' Church, Green Co., Tennessee;

4th 1823 Sinking Spring Church, Green Co., Tennessee;

5th 1824 Keinadt's [Koiner's] Church, Augusta Co., Virginia.³²²

Thus, the congregation of St. John's, and its commodious log building, became hosts to the first Tennessee Synod meeting held within the boundaries of the State of North Carolina.

Among those present at this meeting were Reverends Philip, Ambrose, and David Henkel, Rev. Daniel Moser, and applicant Adam Miller, Jr.. Members of the entire church council of St. John's were present as delegates, as was Mr. John Moretz, representing St. Peter's. A day earlier, sermons were presented by Reverends Ambrose Henkel and Christian Moretz. On Sunday, the Lord's Supper was administered to 206 communicants, an extremely large number for this era. During this meeting, Adam Miller, Jr. was ordained as deacon.³²³

Thirteen services, including two communion services, were held in 1826. On June 3rd and 4th, twenty-two were confirmed into the St. John's Lutheran family. Thirty-four baptisms were registered, plus one each at Peter Hoke's and Moses Justice's. A double funeral was performed for children of Daniel Moser. The congregation was still in a period of rapid growth.³²⁴

Ten regular sermons were delivered by Henkel at St. John's in 1827, with two of them incorporating the Lord's Supper. Twenty-three baptisms were performed. A funeral service was performed for a Mr. Baker, but whether this was at St. John's can't be determined. Henkel continued to occasionally preach at the homes of John Miller and Moses Justice, and often performed baptisms on these occasions. On the Friday before the second Sunday in October, John N. Stirewalt was ordained as deacon in accordance with a resolution from the September Synod meeting. Reverends Daniel Moser and Ambrose Henkel, assisted with this service. The following Sunday was communion, and Ambrose Henkel was in attendance. At that year's Synod meeting, a draft of the translation of Luther's Small Catechism was approved for publication by Synod. This continued the Henkel influence towards

319. Henkel, p. 58.

320. *David Henkel Diary, 1824.*

321. *Ibid.* 1825. This John Miller may have been the St. John's member, as Henkel usually visited his house the day before or day after St. John's.

322. Henkel, pp. 24, 43, 47, 53, 60, 65.

323. *Ibid.* pp. 65-66.

324. *David Henkel Diary, 1826.*

English, and this work was considered "probably the first full, direct translation of said work ever published in this country in the English." David Henkel was further requested to similarly translate the entire Augsburg Confession of Faith -- a task he never accomplished.³²⁵

The year 1828 lists twelve David Henkel services at St. John's, two communions, at least ten baptisms, and sixteen confirmations. Fortunately, a confirmation list in David Henkel's handwriting has been preserved, which most likely is the class of 1828:

Wesley White
Eliza Summit
Barnett Sigmon
Nancy Summit
Daniel Stein
Patsy Sigmon
David Stein
Susan Sigmon
Peter Stein
Barbara Stein
Henry Stein
Sally Stein
Henry Miller
Harriet C. Killian
John Sigmon
David Sigmon³²⁶

For the first time in the David Henkel era, services were held on Christmas day.³²⁷

1829 was the last full year of David Henkel's service, with at least ten sermons during the year. On February 1, five slaves were baptized for widow Killian. Ten additional baptisms were performed during the course of the year. Consistent with tradition, the Lord's Supper was administered twice. Henkel was unable to attend the April service due to the birth of his daughter, Elenore, at midnight.³²⁸

During the David Henkel era, several early Catawba County pioneers died. The Cemetery stones display such names Adam Grund (Grount) (1760-1822), Lewis Hafner (1747-1823), Katherine Hoke (1773-1816), Theobald Hunsucker (1740-1822), Andrew Killian (1771-1828), Peter Little, Sr., Esq. (1752-1822), John Miller (1763-1822), Frantz Sammit (1741-1818), George Sigmon (no dates), Polser Sigmon (1754-1820), Catherine Thronburgh (1763-1822), and Daniel Woodring (1763-1825). There are several other stones and markers which are indecipherable. Whether these persons were members of the St. John's congregations is not known with certainty, as the graveyard was used by the community, not just members of the church.³²⁹

The year of 1830 temporarily ended the first major Henkel influence on St. John's. Although 12 were baptized before August, Henkel became ill, fully missing the month of May. His last Holy Communion service was held on June 13, and his last regular and/or baptismal service at St. John's, on August 8, 1830. He last preached at Philadelphia Church on August 12, after which his diary abruptly stops. He died from indigestion (dyspepsia) on

325. *David Henkel Diary, 1827*. Henkel, pp. 73-74, 79-80. Apparently, there was continued displeasure and/or suspicion associated with Schober's version in *Luther*.

326. Loose Paper, Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, 8653-h, box 1, "Church Statistics." This paper was not dated, nor was the location given. On the same page were two-year statistics from Rev. Adam Miller, Jr., who was ordained in 1826. This narrows the date to 1828 to 1830. Saturday, April 12, 1828 was the only date after 1826 that Henkel lists a St. John's class of 16 in his Diary. Comparison of the names to the 1830 and 1840 census indicates that most of these were living in the St. John's community. Wesley White married into the Stine family; Harriet Killian was the daughter of Andrew Killian (Jr.), who is buried in the cemetery; and the Summits, Sigmons, and Millers were living nearby.

327. *David Henkel Diary, 1828*.

328. *Ibid*, 1829.

329. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, pp. 83-121.

June 15, 1831, at thirty-six years of age. His wife reported that his last words were, "O Lord Jesus Thou Son of God."³³⁰

During his brief career, David Henkel "preached upwards of three thousand and two hundred sermons. . . . He baptized two thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven infants, and two hundred and forty-three adults, and he confirmed one thousand one hundred and five persons."³³¹ Henkel's sermon totals averaged nearly two hundred per year.

Henkel is buried in St. John's Cemetery, with the funeral service being conducted by Pastor Moser, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain".³³² The epitaph on the monument, erected in St. John's cemetery in his memory, requires no further commentary:

Sacred to the Memory of Revd David Henkel Later pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Lincoln County, No. Ca. This monument is erected by the congregations over which he presided, In testimony of their respect to him as a highly talented and distinguished Minister of the Gospel.

He was born in Staunton, Augusta County, Va. May the 1 in 1791 [sic. 1795]. Commenced the Ministry in 1812 and was ordained a Pastor the 7th of June 1819, in which capacity he was distinguished for Industry, correct reasoning and love of truth, In sound Judgment and deep researches into the Mysteries of the Gospel and ardent desire to promote the Redeemers Kingdom truly characterized him as a servant of the Lord During his life he manifested himself to be the zealous friend to Religious and Political Liberties. and having accomplished officially twenty two years of an active and useful life He finished the labors assigned him by divine Providence numbered his days and applied his heart unto wisdom He departed this life the 15th day of June 1831. Aged 36 years One month and Eleven Days He expired in him reliance upon the Promises of the Gospel.

Blessed are the Dead who die in the Lord Yea Saith the Spirit that they may rest from their labors and their works do follow them.

Remember Friend, as you pass by,
As you are now, so once was I,
As I am now, you soon will be,
Pray think about Eternity.³³³

The impact of David Henkel was felt throughout the area west of the Catawba. When Henkel and Daniel Moser aligned with the Tennessee Synod, nearly the entire body of Lutheran Churches in the areas now called Gaston, Lincoln, and Catawba counties followed them. Only a portion of Old St. Paul's, Grace, and Salem are ascertained to have continued connection with the North Carolina Synod for several years. So complete was the local movement to the Tennessee Synod, that just prior to 1921, when the Tennessee Synod merged with the North Carolina Synod, there was not a single Lutheran Church in Catawba, Gaston, or Lincoln counties that was a member of the North Carolina Synod, although a few congregations had aligned with them from time to time.³³⁴

For nearly a century, the writings and principles of David Henkel were held in high esteem by the leading Lutheran theologians in North Carolina and other states on the eastern seaboard and the midwest. His few writings, published and re-published by various Lutheran Synods as typifying the Lutheran belief on certain subjects of some controversy, include the following:

1817: *The Essence of the Christian Religion, and Reflections on Futurity.*

1821: *The Carolinian Herald of Liberty, Religious and Political.*

1821: *Objections to the Constitution of the General Synod.*

1822: *The Heavenly Flood of Regeneration, or Treatise on Holy Baptism.*

330. *David Henkel Diary, 1830.* Henkel, pp. 80-81. Letter from Catharine Henkel to Ambrose Henkel, April 17, 1832, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

331. Henkel, p. 81.

332. *Ibid.*

333. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, p. 85.

334. Morgan, pp. 329-330, 356-359.

1825: *An Answer to Joseph Moore*, a Methodist minister who published a doctrinal pamphlet against the previous.

1828: *Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod*, primarily drafted by Henkel.

1828: *Treatise on Prayer*, appended to the Synod Minutes of that year.

1829: *A Translation from the German of Luther's Small Catechism*, with Preliminary Observations by the translator.

1830: *An Essay on Regeneration*.

1831: *A Treatise on the Person and Incarnation of Jesus Christ, in which some of the principal arguments of the Unitarians are examined*.³³⁵

David Henkel's estate papers listed items of real and personal property. At the top of this list was 190 volumes³³⁶ -- an extremely large library for a frontier pastor in the year 1831, and testament to Henkel's self-taught scholarship.

The Tennessee Synod adopted, with still-young David Henkel being the principal author, of one of the purest, cleanest, "church"-oriented, anti-autocratic, constitutions ever written for a Lutheran Synod in this country. "The rules and principles of church government are contained in the Holy Scriptures, and no Christian organization has the right to make rules or regulations which are not strictly according to the Bible." This constitution was based on the written "symbols" of the Lutheran faith -- the Holy Bible, the Augsburg Confessions, and the Book of Concord -- possibly the first Synodical constitution to verbally incorporate these doctrines as a basis. It denied the right of the majority in matters of doctrine, as this democratic principle was considered a human contrivance and not founded in Scriptures. It espoused ultimate congregational authority, to reduce the likelihood of religious principles falling into the hands of a few men. This Synod was designed as an advisory body, without regulatory or judicial power over its Churches. As the customary license system for ordination was not in accordance with the Epistles of Apostle Paul, the categories of Deacon and Pastor were re-established. The individual Church was allowed the responsibility to choose whom it wanted for its pastorate, and that person could be ordained by any pastor, without synodical consent. The new Synod believed in the complete separation of Church and State to the point that it was even reluctant to handle money, except as was necessary to defray the costs of publications and missionary expenses. Accordingly, they refused to incorporate, would not own property, and maintained no legal identity, in order to avoid any suspicion of a civil status. For over sixty years, this Synod staunchly refused to align itself with any other Lutheran body, as it would not compromise its original founding principles.³³⁷

The Tennessee Synod Constitution was later used verbatim by other Synods.

. . . that doctrine is of first and fundamental importance in the Church; that purity and unity of doctrine is of all things paramount in ecclesiastical affairs; that in the distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran Church lies the fully sufficient and the only justification of her separate existence. . . . Ecclesiastical union without doctrinal unity is incompatible with the true spirit of Lutheranism and involves a denial of the very right of existence claimed by the Lutheran Church.

. . . the duty and the privilege of maintaining, preserving, and propagating the pure doctrine of the Church of Christ and, in fact, all the rights and duties of the Church, are primarily vested, not in the ministry, not in synods and consistories, not in associations and societies within the Church, not in the State or State functionaries, but in the Christian congregations and their individual members. . . . the Synod has never been invested with the title or the powers of a judicatory, but is and must remain an advisory body only, each congregation being the supreme tribunal in its own affairs, the supervision and, when necessary, the disciplining of ministers and teachers not excepted.³³⁸

Although the preceding quotations sound as if they could have been written by David Henkel, they are excerpted from Professor A. L. Graebner's 1893 historical address to the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago--sixty-two years after Henkel's death. Eventually, one by one, all Lutheran Synods returned to the basic confessions written by Martin Luther and his contemporaries, and proudly boasted them in their constitutions.

335. Henkel, pp. 80-82. This author was fortunate in finding each writing except the "Small Catechism." The Small Catechism is attributed to either Ambrose or David Henkel, depending on the source.

336. An Inventory of the Estate of David Henkel, North Carolina Archives, CR060.508.59. From the files of Mrs. Gwendolyn B. Sherrill.

337. Henkel, pp. 25-30. Morgan, pp. 73-76.

338. Graebner, p. 329.

The David Henkel quote, "I am not to blame when I have offered unto you to make the decision by the Word of God," remains unimpeachable advice to Christian Churches over one hundred seventy years later.

Although David Henkel did not live to see his convictions spread throughout the Lutheran Church in North America, his plain-spoken and defiantly-Lutheran message was surely heard, and it was destined to continue -- in no small part by his son, a child who was present at the grave site, and who was now nearly eleven years old.

On November 19, 1830, another infant son was crying in a St. John's member's family. Coincidentally, the parents' names were also David and Catherine. The baby's given name was John, after his grand-father's formerly-German name, Johann. His younger brothers would be named Peter and James. His middle name was derived from a contemporary of Martin Luther by the name of Philip Melanchthon, who had compiled and presented a confessional statement to a Diet in Augsburg in 1530 -- later known as the "Augsburg Confession of Faith." This infant was destined to become a driving force in area Lutheranism in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when he became known as the Reverend John Melanchton Smith.

The torch was passed.

And the word of the Lord was published throughout the region. Acts 13:49.

THE INTERIM

. . . but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed. Romans 5:3-5.

This chapter was so-named, because for the next thirteen years, there was no direct Henkel influence on the Lutheran congregation. St. John's Lutheran records between 1830 and 1843 are scant, fragmented, and inconclusive, so much history of this era, as presented herein, is similarly deficient.

The Tennessee Synod and the several Lutheran congregations grieved the loss of David Henkel. Upon his death, St. John's Lutherans were left without a pastor, and the two children living in the shadow of the church building were a decade or two away from serving them.

Pastor Nehemiah Bonham, of the Tennessee Synod, had visited David Henkel on several occasions in 1830, and had "staid here all night." He described Henkel's condition as "a low stait of health." Pastor Bonham heard the news of Henkel's death at School House Church in early July of 1831. By the 14th of that month, he "went on to St. John's. I preached, went home with Mr. John Smith, staid all night." Bonham was an English-speaking preacher, and was among the first to supply David Henkel's vacant pulpit. He had applied for admission into the Tennessee Synod in 1824, whereby he was received "by the extension of the right hand of brotherly fellowship." His home was in the Buncombe/Haywood County area, but like the other pastors, he spent his summers "on the dirt road." In 1829, Bonham had been appointed by Synod to "visit all the congregations in connection with Synod, and look after their interests." When Bonham visited the area in later years, he usually "staid" with area pastors; however, he did spend two consecutive nights with Elders John Smith and Frederick Hoke in 1834, and preached on occasional years at St. Peters (1834) and Zion (1835). On his trip in 1834, he "staid" at Stofful Sigman's house. During these trips, he crossed the "Great Cataby" or the "Great Catawby."¹ While the ministry of Bonham is of minor importance to St. John's, he appears to be the first English pastor accepted into the Tennessee Synod, and certainly promoted its change from exclusive use of the German language to English (or both languages). He believed in the doctrines contained in the Lutheran Confession, openly contested pastors who preached otherwise, was a tireless worker in mountain regions of several States, and introduced the Tennessee Synod into the State of Georgia.

If little information is available regarding the Lutheran congregation during this era, even less can be found about its Reformed counterpart. Generally, those of the Reformed congregation were served for years by missionaries from Pennsylvania, or the itinerant efforts of the Pastors serving the eastern North Carolina German churches. From 1812 until 1828, Reformed ministry at St. John's could, at best, be termed sporadic. Supply pastors who reported visits to the area include the names of Reily, Leidy, Rudy, and Knous. In 1824, Rev. John Rudy visited St. John's. His missionary report stated that he "received forty-three members into the church and administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to one hundred and fifty communicants." The St. John's Reformed congregation certainly had not died, and was also of considerable size. Rudy also reported that there were "fourteen vacant churches in North Carolina west of the Yadkin River."

During this long reign of spiritual destitution, the people in many of the churches did not neglect the assembling of themselves together for the purpose of social worship, but on the Sabbath, in the absence of the regular administrations of the sanctuary, met and sung and prayed, and read the Scriptures and sermons of such men as Rambach and others -- which accounts for their preservation as churches

1. Rev. Nehemiah Bonham Diary - 1829-1838, N. C. State Archives Microfilm Reel P, 5.1P, no page numbers in Diary. Although Bonham's Journal has many misspelled words, it is easy to read phonetically. Henkel, pp. 64, 77.

through the long period, during which they were as sheep without a shepherd, and is well calculated to awaken the sympathy and liberality of Christians generally in favor of their still needy descendants.²

The Reformed congregation was revitalized in 1828 with the arrival of Reverend John George Fritchey, who became pastor to various area churches. It has been stated, "During his pastorate of twelve years St. John's became well established, resulting in considerable numerical expansion. It has been suggested that during his ministry the Reformed Church as a denominational entity in North Carolina was organized; if organized prior to that time, then so securely established that its future was unquestioned."³

Pastor Fritchey was normally very denominationally oriented. He passed through the congregations, visited its members, and attempted to restore former German Reformed members to the religion of their forefathers. Some of the St. John's Reformed members had become accustomed to the Lutheran faith and customs by that time, and others identified themselves with Fritchey. Fritchey also discovered problems in areas south of St. John's with a strong English Presbyterian influence among former German Reformed families, and cultivated many families back into the denomination.⁴

Fritchey also brought a few revivalist (possibly pietist) tendencies with him, which were fairly foreign to the St. John's congregational group, based on the past sixteen or eighteen years. When he agreed to help at a Methodist revival in southern Catawba County, he was confronted by a church elder of the nearest German congregation, as "their mode and manner was contrary to the Pennsylvania Dutch." He labeled these new Methodists as "gougers," as they infiltrated his congregations, but both Lutheran and Reformed became members of a new Methodist congregation.⁵

The German Reformed congregations requested, and were granted, permission to organize an advisory body at a meeting in Hagerstown, Maryland, on September 26, 1830. On May 21, 1831, the Classis of North Carolina was formally organized at Brick Church (Klapp's) in Guilford County, the location of one of the earliest Reformed settlements. In addition to Fritchey, other pastors were William Hauck, Daniel B. Lerch, and future St. John's Pastor, John H. Crawford. Elders present at this meeting were Col. Daniel Clapp, Esq., Adam Roseman, Col. John Hoke, and Col. Philip Hedrick. Reverends George Boger and John Brown were accepted into connection with the body, but were not present. Boger had made an occasional visit to St. John's during the preceding decades.⁶

A total of seventeen congregations from North Carolina were represented, and seven from Virginia. From Lincoln County, St. John's, St. Paul's, Emmanuel, Grace, and Daniels were charter members of the Classis.⁷

A statement is included in the Minutes of this inaugural meeting regarding the condition of the denomination at that time.

That notwithstanding the German Reformed Congregations, in this portion of the Lord's vineyard, having been long destitute of stated ministers, and notwithstanding the peculiar situation of those congregations, and the many formidable difficulties which have presented themselves at different times; yet, they have reason to be thankful to the great Head of the Church, that our brethren in the Lord have not altogether labored in vain. The preaching of the Word, together with the administration of the ordinances, is, in most of the congregations, well attended. . . .

Most of the congregations which have been regularly supplied with preaching of the Word, and the administration of the ordinance, since they have been supplied with stated ministers, are increasing in numbers and we trust in vital piety and Godliness. It is true that the labors of our ministers are too scattered at this time, . . . but we believe that as they increase in numbers, this disadvantage will be removed by increasing the number and condensing the labors of their ministers.⁸

2. "The German Reformed Churches in North Carolina," transcr., author unknown, cited from *Western Missionary*, March 16, 1854, p. 3.

3. Peeler, p. 423.

4. G. M. Yoder, "A Sketch of the Methodist Church of Seventy Four Years Ago in the South Fork Valley," *CCN*, 11 Oct. 1907.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Minutes, Classis of North Carolina, 1831*, copy of handwritten manuscript, located at Catawba College, Salisbury, NC; hereinafter referenced *NC Classis Minutes*.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

As an outgrowth of these needs, in 1834, the Classis formed an Education Society. "the object of which shall be to aid in the education of indigent and pious young men, within the bounds of the Classis for the Gospel ministry." This movement soon bore fruit, as Lincoln County's Samuel Lantz was subsidized in his ministerial pursuit a few years later. By 1838, the Classis endorsed the educational institutions at York, Carlisle, and Mercersburg, Pennsylvania.⁹

In 1834, at a meeting at Grace Church, Lincoln County, a special petition was presented to maintain the services of Fritchey:

... which is a call to Rev. John G. Fritchey from the Congregations in Lincoln County, to again take charge of said congregations.

This Call was accepted by Fritchey, and confirmed by the Classis.¹⁰

In 1836, a mere eight years after Fritchey's arrival, the condition of the Lincoln County congregations was described positively:

In Lincoln County, some of our churches have also been refreshed with refreshings of God's grace; and judging by the rule laid down by the Saviour, "that by their fruit ye shall know them," your committee has reason to believe that vital piety is here on the increase. There also a considerable accession to the Church is anticipated during the present year.¹¹

This prediction proved to be accurate. At the formation of the Classis in 1831, the estimated communicant membership under Fritchey was about 300 in the five congregations. By 1834, this figure increased to 380, and was subject to further increase. By 1841, the Lincoln charge boasted 400 communicants.¹² In nearly every year, Fritchey led the Classis in the numbers of baptisms, often at about fifty souls per year. While the organization centralized itself in the eastern churches, rapid growth was occurring in the west -- not unlike the Lutherans.

The situation of the German Reformed Churches improved to the point that Rev. David Crooks boasted the following in 1843:

Our pulpits are now regularly filled. Our churches enjoy steadily the means of grace and the ordinances of the House of God. We are growing in numbers, as well as in moral and religious strength.¹³

Pastor Fritchey served the Classis as president in the years 1835 and 1838. He was over the Lincoln "charge," which was growing in numbers of congregations, as well as in communicants. By 1837, Matthews Church and Lower Smyrna were accepted as members. In the following year, Lower Smyrna was added to Fritchey's jurisdiction. No other pastor in the Classis had seven congregations under his care, and Fritchey's service is remarkable. In 1838, the Lincoln circuit was divided, with St. John's, St. Paul's, Grace, and Lower Smyrna constituting the northern district, where Fritchey remained as pastor.¹⁴

A curious entry occurs in the Classis Minutes of 1839:

Andrew H. Shuford, Elder in a congregation recently organized by Mr. J. G. Fritchey on Lilis Creek, Lincoln Co., N. C., appeared before Classis, as delegate from said congregation and made application for its reception under care of this judicatory . . . Received.¹⁵

9. *Ibid.*, 1834, 1836, 1838.

10. *Ibid.*, 1834.

11. *Ibid.*, 1836.

12. *Ibid.*, 1831, 1834, 1841.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 53, cited from *Minutes*, 1843, p. 159 ff.

14. *Ibid.*, 1835-1838.

15. *Ibid.*, 1839. Presumably, this is Lyle's Creek. This author is completely unaware of another church on Lyle's Creek, but there must have been one. RCC: Anne McAllister commented that this is a major discovery since no other record of this Reformed church appears to exist. She noted that Andrew H. Shuford was a sheriff of Catawba County and later became a Methodist, probably after the Reformed church failed.

In 1839, Fritchey returned to Pennsylvania, and a second influential pastor, Rev. John H. Crawford, became regular pastor of the Lincoln County churches. Crawford had also served as Classis president in 1832 and 1834. The Classis alternated meeting locations, and Grace Church was host in 1834, followed by St. Paul's in 1838.¹⁶

Among the church practices of the Reformed congregation was the institution of "protracted meetings" of two or more days duration. Also,

Whereas it is necessary to maintain uniformity, as far as possible, in our religious exercises; and whereas some of our churches have adopted the sitting instead of the standing posture at the Lord's table, therefore,

Resolved, That it be recommended to all our churches to adopt the sitting posture, at the Lord's table.¹⁷

As the Reformed congregation was stabilizing and growing, the Lutheran congregation underwent a period of decline in the late twenties and early thirties.

But there were other factors. The formation of the St. Peter's congregation served to divide St. John's due to geography. The location of St. Peter's, near the Oxford Ford, made it attractive to those Lutheran and Reformed adherents who had moved across the river. St. Peter's also gained the support of such family names as Bowman, Deal, Eisenhour, Hedrick, Hefner, Lail, Little, Moretz, Moser, Stine, and many others, who had been so prominent at St. John's during the preceding decades, but lived closer to the new church. Similar to the movement that formed the new church of St. John's in the 1890s from a nucleus of St. Paul's members, St. John's was destined to become the "mother" of other congregations. In 1830, the Lutheran congregation at St. John's was estimated at thirty families (heads of households), and St. Peter's had quickly grown to twenty. While no longer the largest congregation in Lincoln, St. John's was still among them.¹⁸

There was also uncertainty from the summer of 1830 until the spring of 1832. Daniel Moser was still available in the area, as he performed the funeral service for David Henkel in 1831. In 1831 and 1832, Moser served as a supply Pastor, with Bonham and others. He is listed continuously at the new congregation of St. Peter's from 1825 through 1839, and assisted in the formation of St. Stephen's/Miller's from 1837 through 1839, resulting in further erosion at St. John's. Moser's known association with the neighboring congregations is a strong indicator that he appeared at St. John's also, at least in a supply role, until his death in 1839.¹⁹ The 232 infant baptisms Moser reported at the 1831 Synod meeting, suggest he supplied Henkel's congregations with some regularity.

Henry Goodman also appears from time to time, as he was ordained as Deacon in 1831, and lived most of his life in Ireddell County. He may have assisted in supply to the vacant congregations, as his name occasionally appears in later records.²⁰

In 1831, St. John's submitted a request to the Tennessee Synod for a pastor, with the preferences being Philip Henkel, George Easterly, or Adam Miller, Jr.. The Synod appointed Adam Miller, Jr. to visit during the fall, and Philip Henkel and George Easterly, in the following spring and summer.²¹

Adam Miller (Jr.) had been preaching with his uncle (Adam Miller, Sr.) in Tennessee, and became an ordained minister of the Tennessee Synod in 1826. For a period of time, he relocated to this area and was tutored in theology and the languages by David Henkel. Sometime prior to April 17, 1832, Miller "moved in this County" and was "attending the Lutheran congregations."²² If his sermons were as logical, well-presented, and forceful as his writings, Pastor Miller was an excellent communicator of the Gospel to his parishioners.

Miller's personality and style typified the Tennessee Synod at that time. He was described by a colleague:

16. Peeler, p. 471.

17. *NC Reformed Classis Minutes*, 1838.

18. "Transactions of the Lutheran Associate Council, held in Lincolnton, 23rd April 1830," LTS: Philadelphia-Dallas then had 40 heads of families, and others ranged from 4 (Lincolnton) to 20 (Beaver Dam). Others are; Lebanon, 8; Zion, 15; School House and Trinity, 30; White Haven, 12; St. Paul's, 15. Families were migrating westward during this period, some to Missouri.

19. *Life Sketches*, p. 148.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

21. *TN Synod Minutes-1831*, pp. 9-10.

22. Letter from Catharine Henkel to Ambrose Henkel, dated 17 April 1832, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

He was a man rather sprightly, though not of remarkably vigorous and brilliant native intellect. He was a ready flippant speaker. His literary and theological attainments were not extensive and varied. He was exceedingly dogmatical and defiant in his manner, and of strong controversial proclivities. . . . He had the reputation of being one of the ablest, if not the very ablest, of all the English preachers in the Tennessee Synod at that time.²³

Miller was accompanied by delegate Peter Hoke to the 1832 Synod meeting, while "John Schmidt" represented St. Peter's. Henry Goodman was ordained as Pastor, which also eased the shortage of area pastors. Goodman maintained a visible presence in the area for many years. Miller's parochial report included a three year total of 485 infant baptisms, 31 adult baptisms, 32 slave baptisms, and 80 confirmations.²⁴

St. John's proudly hosted the 1833 Tennessee Synod convention, which commenced on Saturday, September 9th, with divine services. Pastor Ambrose Henkel delivered an English address, and Goodman followed with a preparatory sermon in German. Confession and absolution concluded the day's worship. On Sunday, the Synod was met by "a large concourse of people," and the arrangements were forced to be modified. Rev. George Easterly addressed the German-speaking members in the Church, and Adam Miller preached an English sermon from a speaking stand outside under the trees. After an intermission, the congregation squeezed into the Church, where Philip Henkel delivered his final sermon from the pulpit of St. John's. The sacramental sermon was in English, after which, the Lord's Supper was administered to about 160 persons.²⁵

Normal Synodical business began on Monday with singing and prayer. During the sessions, Ambrose Henkel presented his translation of the Augsburg Confession for review by the pastors and delegates. A few years later, it was published.²⁶

"St. Johannes" was represented at this meeting by delegate "Meils W. Abernathy." He presented a petition, requesting suitable pastoral supply, if the Synod elected to send Pastor Miller on extended trips to distant congregations. "It was ordered that a sermon on the Lord's Supper, translated from the German of Johan Arndt's *Postil*, be connected with the Minutes, and that they be printed in the German and English." The intent of this publication was to emphasize the distinctive sacramental doctrine of the Lutheran forefathers, which Synod felt was not being practiced by other Lutherans. Frederick Hoke, Esq. was appointed to contract for the printing of the Minutes, and Philip Henkel was requested to prepare a "Dissertation on the Person of Jesus Christ, as extant in the Christian Book of Concord."²⁷

The latter work was not to be completed, as the young Tennessee Synod became victim to considerable losses in its pastorate by the decade of the 1830's. The first major blow came prior to the death of David Henkel. On November 17, 1825, Paul Henkel died at the age of seventy years. Henkel was among the first to recognize the importance of the language transition from German towards English, and, as early as 1816, he published an English hymn-book. Soon thereafter, he published an English translation of Luther's Catechism, one of the first of its kind in the entire country.²⁸ It was through Paul Henkel's insight, and the continuation of this language transition by Henkel's sons, with help from the Henkel Press, that many, truly-Lutheran, publications became available to early nineteenth-century, English-speaking Lutherans.

After the 1833 Synod meeting at St. John's, Philip Henkel traveled to Guilford and adjacent counties. Nine days after Synod, he conducted the first day of catechetical instruction at Richland Church, Randolph County, when he became ill with a "bilious fever." His last sermon was delivered from the text of Colossians 3:1-5, which includes the following excerpt:

23. Abel J. Brown, "Dr. Henkel's History of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod Reviewed and Supplemented, No. 8," *OCF* XIX:19, 13 May 1891. The events of this chapter were in three parts, including "No. 7," *OCF* XIX:18, 6 May 1891; "No. 9," XIX:20, 20 May 1891; hereinafter referenced as one series with the reference as Brown. Microfilm borrowed from Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis.

24. *TN Synod Minutes*, 1832, pp. 4, 10.

25. *TN Synod Minutes--1833*, p. 13. Georg Sigmann was a delegate for St. Peter's. The communion attendance is not as large as some of the known statistics of the teens and 1820's. This suggests (but is not positively documented) that the Reformed communed with the Lutherans during the extended period without a Reformed pastor.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 13-20.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Henkel, pp. 67-70.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.²⁹

After a few weeks of suffering, the third Lutheran pastor at St. John's, and current President of the Tennessee Synod, was taken to rest on October 9, 1833. Presumably, Rev. Henry Goodman performed the funeral service on the following day. Goodman then completed the instruction, and confirmed the class, including Alfred Fox, who'd later become a minister of the Gospel, and serve in Catawba, Lincoln, and Gaston Counties. During Philip Henkel's career, he preached nearly four thousand three hundred and fifty sermons, baptized four thousand one hundred and fifteen infants, and three hundred twenty-five adults, and confirmed one thousand six hundred and fifty persons. His parting words were:

Christ is my life alone,
To die is gain for me;
I give myself to be his own:
O may I ever with him be.³⁰

In 1836, another Tennessee Synod pastor, John N. Stirewalt, met his untimely death, and Daniel Moser officiated the funeral service. The name Stirewalt is mentioned, as he was ordained a Deacon at St. John's in October of 1827, and was laboring in the Rowan County congregations.³¹

On July 11, 1839, Daniel Moser fell victim to the shadow of death, with his last sermon being at St. Peter's on June 30 of that year. Four days later, he was found about a mile and one half from his house, sitting at the road, stricken with paralysis. His funeral was performed by the two remaining Lutheran Pastors in Lincoln County -- Adam Miller and A. J. Brown, of Killian's Mill. Daniel Moser was buried in St. John's cemetery, not far from the grave of his friend and associate, David Henkel. Thus, the remains of two bold men, who were willing to stake their entire careers and reputations in a debate against the North Carolina Synod in 1826 and 1827, now permanently rested a few yards apart.³²

Moser was born in Orange County on May 8, 1790, and licensed to preach in Lincolnton on April 6, 1812. He had no formal college or theological training, was ordained in 1819 to Deacon, and in 1820 to Pastor. In his 27 year ministry, he preached 1,943 sermons, performed the sacrament of Holy Baptism 2,450 times, and confirmed 821 into the Lutheran Church.³³ Moser is eulogized:

In this office he maintained honor, dignity and firmness . . . as a preacher, . . . he was firm in the faith, and worth of his vocation; . . . and, in a word, his whole life was irrepachable, as far as it is possible for that of man to be.³⁴

In addition to being a Lutheran Pastor, Moser was also well-remembered as a leading citizen, businessman, postmaster, and entrepreneur in Lincoln County. His estate included the typical items one would expect of a Pastor -- about 180 books, including several bibles, hymnbooks, catechisms, primers, and numerous pamphlets and periodicals. But Moser also operated a successful farm, with 13 cows, 6 horses, 34 hogs, 18 sheep, and 10 beehives. He also was a blacksmith, woodworker (probably cabinet maker), shoemaker, and bookbinder. But Moser's principal business endeavor was a water-powered "mill cotton gin." Other items in his estate indicate that this source of power could be harnessed for the grinding of flour or powering of woodworking machinery.³⁵

Within fifteen years, five Lutheran pastors with connections to St. John's and the Tennessee Synod had slept with their fathers. Their importance to individual lives and families of the region cannot be overestimated, as their collective statistics in sermons preached, baptisms performed, etc., are staggering. Their abilities to read and write fluently in at least two languages, and in two drastically different scripts, attest to their self-taught scholarship.

29. Henkel, pp. 85-86. Fox, p. 18. As Goodman completed the confirmation class, it is assumed he performed the funeral.

30. *Ibid.*

31. Henkel, pp. 92-93. *David Henkel Diary, 1827.*

32. Henkel, pp. 98-99.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. Daniel Moser Estate Papers, NC Archives. Copies furnished by Gwendolyn Bost Sherrill, Conover, NC.

Their extensive travels and inner conviction towards the spread and nurturing of the Gospel during a primitive period of American history is difficult to comprehend in an era of automobiles, super-highways, airplanes, and space ships.³⁶

Decimated by these deaths, the Synod came under the bitter attacks from its neighbors to the north, south, and from within. Its ordination policies did not require classical education, and there was not one formally-educated Pastor among them during a decade where educational institutions were being organized and promoted in this and other states. Its constitution was considered weak by some critics, as it conferred many responsibilities to its congregations. And finally, its confessional basis was not accepted, or was misunderstood, by most other Lutherans. Continued spread of its doctrinal message fell upon its second generation of pastors. Adam Miller ranked among the new leaders of the Tennessee Synod, and he accepted this role.

One of the prominent Lutheran pastors in South Carolina was Godfrey Dreher. It was Dreher who licensed David Henkel in 1812, who met with Henkel and Moser in 1823, and the same, who organized the pastors of the South Carolina Synod in January of 1824. Circumstances surrounding Dreher soon involved Adam Miller, the Tennessee Synod, and indirectly, area congregations.

During 1834, Dreher was having personal difficulties with a fellow pastor, Jacob Moser. Moser proposed to his St. Jacob's congregation, in Lexington District, to conduct a protracted service, or form of revival. Certain members did not feel this type of service was traditional with the Lutheran Church. Two Elders invited Godfrey Dreher, who was not in favor of these "new measures" (as he labeled them), to come and preach to them. Moser became dissatisfied with this situation, since a portion of the congregation preferred Dreher. As this conflict grew, there were congregational petitions against Moser, and some of the members wanted to dismiss Moser and enlist Dreher's services. On one of Dreher's preaching appointments, Moser was present, and Dreher invited him into the pulpit. Rather than preach, Moser charged Dreher with presenting "heretical and dangerous doctrines."³⁷

This displeasure found its way onto the floor of the South Carolina Synod in 1834, when Moser leveled the doctrinal charges, and Dreher countered with charges of "improper conduct" against Moser. The Synod found neither allegation to be well-founded, they requested that both cease preaching at St. Jacob's for the sake of peace, and they arranged for a replacement until the tensions subsided.³⁸

Dreher was questioned regarding his doctrinal beliefs. Later, he felt that this investigation by the Synod was not in accordance with its constitution, and that he had neither preached anything contrary to the Confession nor violated Synodical regulations. The personal dispute between Dreher and Moser would not adjust itself, although there were several arbitration efforts by the Synod and some of its Pastors. In 1836, Dreher insisted that charges against Moser be heard, but the Synod refused.³⁹

In early 1837, Dreher visited North Carolina, and met with Pastors Adam Miller and Abel J. Brown, the latter of whom had preached his first sermon at St. John's a few years before. After an exchange of doctrinal viewpoints, the three pastors found themselves in general agreement. Upon Dreher's invitation, Miller and Brown made plans to visit South Carolina. Perhaps the disgruntled Dreher and his congregations would choose to align themselves with the Tennessee Synod.⁴⁰

The arrival of the Tennessee Synod pastors in South Carolina met with "great excitement."

The public mind was excited; a spirit of inquiry was raised among the people; and they flocked together to hear these men preach; they were convinced that they [Miller and Brown] had been greatly abused and misrepresented.⁴¹

36. All five are proven to have delivered sermons in both languages. Paul Henkel is not known to have written much in English, although glimpses through some of his writings suggests he could have, but preferred German.

37. Godfrey Dreher, *A Fair and Candid Statement of Plain Matters of Facts, and Accompanying Remarks, in Reference to Difficulties Which Have Existed, and Still Exist, Between the Lutheran Synod of So. Ca. and Godfrey Dreher*, (Columbia, SC: L. C. Morgan, 1842), pp. 4-5.

38. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7. The supply pastor was Dr. Ernest Hazelius, professor at the seminary.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-10.

40. *Ibid.*. Brown.

41. Dreher, p. 11. Abel J. Brown later described the atmosphere of these gatherings as similar to a political rally.

Other Lutheran ministers in South Carolina had spread the word against these "heretics," and "solemnly warned the people" against these "Henkelites." While the people had probably heard or read about these "religious monstrosities," most had never seen one in person, nor heard one of their sermons. Against an aroused public, the venerable and popular Pastor Dreher introduced Adam Miller into his South Carolina congregations of St. John's and Zion in April of 1837.⁴² In June, Miller and Brown returned to South Carolina, and preached in Dreher's congregations for a period of three weeks.⁴³

During this trip, they were confronted by "inveterate opposition and implacable hostility," by a "scurrilous circular letter," signed by a fictitious "Melancthon,"⁴⁴ and entitled, *To the Members of the Lutheran Churches within the bounds of the S. C. Synod*. The handbills were scattered widely throughout Dreher's congregations on a Saturday evening prior to two scheduled preaching appointments. It described these outsiders as preaching "pernicious and soul-destroying doctrines of the notorious Henkel."⁴⁵ "Melancthon" had no praise for the pastor of St. John's.

You have recently had in your midst, a minister, who has been endeavoring to poison your minds against THE TRUTH, by publishing a system of Doctrines, entirely at variance with scripture, and which are every way calculated to sow the seeds of discord and strife among your Churches, and to embitter the fountain of all our social happiness and enjoyment. . . . It must certainly be a source of surprise to every reflecting mind, that . . . the fact should have remained undiscovered until the days of Mr. Henkel and his worthy coadjutors. All the learned and distinguished men who have graced the Church both in Europe and America, have failed to make the discovery, and it has been left for Mr. Henkel, who, to say the least of him, was not distinguished for his learning and ability, either as a scholar or as a Preacher. . . . for I know these gentlemen of old, and will never believe any thing they say, without they first PROVE IT. . . . The whole system of the Henkelites is rotten to the very core, . . . the doctrines which they attempt to inculcate, have no authority in Scripture. . . . Brethren and friends: "beware of false-prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but who inwardly are ravening wolves."⁴⁶

The publication devoted considerable space to the sacrament of baptism, similar to the 1819 charges against David Henkel, and arguments of Methodist Joseph Moore in the 1820's.⁴⁷

"Melancthon" either had never read David Henkel's response to Moore, chose to distort it, or simply, wished to discredit Adam Miller and the Tennessee Synod in any possible manner.

Upon Dreher's recommendation, Miller and Brown chose to regard the handbill "with silent contempt." The following morning's sermon was presented in an orderly manner, and no mention was made of the publication. At the afternoon meeting of a normally-small congregation, a surprisingly-large group assembled, including Rev. George Haltiwanger of the South Carolina Synod. When Dreher requested Haltiwanger to accompany them in the services, he publicly refused. Whereas Miller and Brown had intended to again disregard the publication and preach normal, non-controversial, sermons, the presence and public statements of Haltiwanger altered their direction. They produced the circular, and attempted to prove "that its charges against the Tennessee Synod were utterly unfounded." They, then, defended the Tennessee Synod doctrines on baptism to the best of their abilities. Afterwards, there was a discussion between Brown and Haltiwanger in the church yard, and a congenial spirit prevailed. Haltiwanger invited Miller and Brown to stay with him at his house, but schedule would not permit it.⁴⁸

42. Brown, Brent H. Holcomb, G. R. S., *Journal of the Rev. Godfrey Dreher, 1819-1851*, transcr., (Easley, SC: Southern Historical Press, 1978), p. 39, lists date of Miller's visits as April 9 at St. John's, and April 16 at Zion.

43. Holcomb, *Dreher's Journal*, p. 40.

44. Rev. A. J. Brown and A. Miller, *A Vindication of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Reply to a Sermon, delivered by the Rev. John Bachman, D. D., on The Doctrine and Discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, (Salem: Blum & Co., 1838), p. 4, hereinafter referenced *Vindication*, copy obtained from the Rev. J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick, Granite Falls, NC. A second copy was seen at Duke University.

45. Brown, "Melancthon," *To the Members of the Lutheran Churches within the bounds of the S. C. Synod*, printed handbill, hereinafter referenced *Melancthon*. Copy obtained from The South Caroliniana Library, Lowrance-Lyles Papers.

46. *Melancthon*.

47. *Ibid*.

48. Brown.

For on Monday, there was an appointment at Dreher's St. Peter's-Piny Woods congregation. There was another large turnout, including a second senior pastor of the South Carolina Synod. Upon notice of this unexpected gentleman, the intended text was immediately revised to Acts 28:22: "But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that it is every where spoken against."⁴⁹

Rest assured, Miller and Brown intended to defend the Tennessee Synod, and seized this occasion to do so. Afterwards, they were introduced to the "gentleman in black," and "soon parted without any mutual regrets."⁵⁰

But the "heresies" of the "Henkelites," spread throughout the churches, which agitated some pastors in the South Carolina Synod. South Carolina was aligned with the General Synod, which still viewed Tennessee with contempt. When Adam Miller stepped into a South Carolina pulpit, the verbal warfare resumed.

But Dreher also became the object of much attention, as he was confronted with a formal inquiry as to whether he sanctioned the doctrines of Miller and Brown. Dreher would not give a definite reply, as he felt that the visitors from Lincoln County were responsible for their own actions and sermon messages. By July, a committee of eight met privately with Dreher, and requested that he voluntarily resign from the South Carolina Synod. Under these circumstances, Dreher complied, and signed a statement of separation. As there were no doctrinal charges, or that of improper conduct, Dreher felt the motive was entirely because he had invited the Tennessee Synod pastors into South Carolina.⁵¹

An article was then published by Dr. Ernest Hazelius, President of Lexington Theological Seminary, which further served to keep the Tennessee Synod in the minds of the people. Dreher reflected on this some years later.

The article prompted Pastor Miller to inquire of Dr. Hazelius, as to which doctrines were being taught incorrectly. Hazelius responded in a letter, "that the Tennessee Synod so called, has not deviated from the Augsburg Confession or its Apology."⁵²

The groundswell of South Carolina opposition culminated at the November Synod meeting, when Charleston's Dr. John Bachman presented a highly critical sermon. His historical perspective included the following:

Some years ago several individuals residing in North Carolina, who had previously been members of our church, on account of some dissatisfaction separated themselves from our communion. They chose as a leader an individual by the name of Hinkel (hence they are called Hinkelites), a weak and illiterate man, whose ground of dissent, as far as can be gathered from the crude, visionary, and inflammatory publications, . . . was that the Evangelical Lutheran Church had departed from the true doctrines of the Reformation, which he and his church attempted to restore. . . . But the evil has recently come nearer to us than we had first anticipated. Their ministers and their doctrines have been introduced into the very bosom of our Churches, which till now have been in regular connexion [sic] with this Synod.⁵³

To protect the South Carolinians from "the influence of error" which he perceived "as dangerous to morals and religion," Bachman identified two categories. First, he felt that the Tennessee Synod was "opposed to Synods, to Sunday Schools, Bible, Missionary, and Temperance Societies, &c."⁵⁴ There is some merit to this assertion, as the Tennessee Synod's Constitution left the varied forms of social ministry to the discretion of its individual congregations and pastors. Opposition to Synods (the General Synod) was well publicized.

Bachman styled the Tennessee Synod as a "declining and unenlightened sect," and described the "paucity" of its numbers and "ignorance" of its people. His second set of allegations involved matters of doctrine, and he accused the Tennessee Synod of teaching the following:

49. *Ibid.*

50. *Ibid.*

51. Dreher, p. 13.

52. *Vindication*, p. 17.

53. John Bachman, D. D., *A Sermon on the Doctrines and Discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, preached at Charleston, S. C., November 12th, 1837, by Appointment of the Synod of South-Carolina, and Adjacent States*, (Charleston: J. S. Burges, 1837), pp. 11-13, copy seen at Alderman Library, UVA. This history and several of the charges in the sermon appear to be largely founded on the general opinions contained in "Melancthon." The answer from the Tennessee Synod suggests they thought Bachman was incorrectly informed.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

1st, that baptism is regeneration;

2nd, that in the Lord's supper the elements become the actual flesh and blood of Christ; and

thirdly, that the participation of the sacraments entitles us to salvation.⁵⁵

Bachman then explained the so-called "errors" promulgated by this "sect." Regarding baptism, Bachman believed that it "is a necessary ordinance, that it is a means of grace." Essentially, there was little disagreement between Dr. Bachman and the actual writings of the Tennessee Synod, except Bachman stated the water was an "emblem" of the Holy Ghost, suggesting both a physical and spiritual baptism. Brown and Miller countered with "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." There were, however, significant differences respecting Holy Communion. Bachman accused Tennessee of teaching the Roman Catholic doctrine of "transubstantiation." He believed, "we see, we feel, we taste, and smell, that what was bread and wine before consecration, is bread and wine still." David Henkel once cited 1 Corinthians 10:15-16 in opposition to this idea, and would have considered such a statement as "symbolism." Clearly, the third allegation (labeled "slander" by Tennessee) is either misunderstanding or misrepresentation, as no pastor of the Tennessee Synod (or any other Lutheran Synod) is known to have preached salvation without faith or repentance.⁵⁶

When the sermon was published and distributed, one Tennessee Synod pastor felt it was charged with being "irregular and schismatic in its origin, unlutheran and heretical in doctrine, and antibenevolent in practice."⁵⁷

To further confound the problem, the South Carolina Synod turned their attention again to Godfrey Dreher. They announced that he was "no longer a minister of the Lutheran Church." Synod members then contacted Dreher's congregations and Elders, and attempted to effect his dismissal. This effort largely failed due to Dreher's popularity, but resulted in discord in some of the congregations.⁵⁸

Naturally, Pastor Adam Miller did not subscribe to the accuracy of Rev. Bachman's sermon. Miller felt that Bachman "lied in a most wicked manner"; however, Miller believed the accusations were so flagrant, that nobody would believe them. "It carries with it its own condemnation."⁵⁹

During March of 1838, Brown returned to South Carolina, and in May, Miller made a visit to answer Bachman's sermon and defend his Synod. At one of his appointments, Miller was met by one or more of the South Carolina pastors, whereupon Rev. John C. Hope, "the gentleman in black," challenged him to a debate. Arrangements were then made as to subjects for discussion, the time, and the location.⁶⁰

55. *Ibid.* These were among the charges Andrew Hoyl and Gottlieb Schober brought against David Henkel in 1819. He was found innocent by the North Carolina Synod, although he and Schober disagreed on all of them. In the next few years, Henkel wrote several pamphlets on these very subjects. Nowhere in David Henkel's writings, or those of other Tennessee Synod Pastors, do these accusations seem justified.

56. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-25. See previous chapter for Henkel's views on Holy Communion, as cited from *Schober's Review*, pp. 60-62.

57. Brown.

58. Dreher, pp. 17-24. Dreher alleged that as soon as he signed the separation agreement in July of 1837, Pastors Hope and Aull visited the Elders of St. Peter's congregation. Hope began preaching to one faction, and was later locked out of the church. In 1839, Hope's minority congregation commenced legal action, which was dismissed from the courts. By 1842, Dreher's majority congregation offered one-half use of the church, but Hope's minority group refused this offer and demanded all claim to the entire property. At time of Dreher's pamphlet (1842), the issue was still not settled. St. Peter's was the Church where Miller and Brown made their forceful defense against *Melancthon*, in Pastor Hope's presence. Although certainly not under the jurisdiction of NC Courts, when a similar situation occurred previously at Organ Church, Rowan County, the North Carolina Supreme Court decided in favor of the majority, and labeled the minority as "dissenters." Dreher must have been familiar with this case, as he used the same basic logic in defense of his "majority" congregation, and viewed their offer to share the facilities as Christian charity. Their refusal baffled Dreher. Ironically, Dreher had participated in the ordination of some of those who now pronounced him to not be a Lutheran minister. Dreher agreed to withdraw from the Synod, but not from the ministry. In addition, Dreher had been ordained by the North Carolina Synod, and was now being "de-frocked" by the South Carolina Synod. How could troubles in a South Carolina church affect the Pastor of St. John's? This author was also surprised. What a curious story! Readers who are interested in further details may see the Dreher pamphlet at Alderman Library, UVA. To read the later account by Abel J. Brown, contact the author. SC Synod Minutes are held at Lineberger Library, Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, SC.

59. Letter from Adam Miller to Ambrose Henkel, 26 May 1838, Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, Accession No. 8653-h, Box 1, Correspondence 1821-1847.

60. Brown. Holcomb, *Dreher Journal* lists dates of the visits. Miller and Brown may have traveled together on both trips.

On Monday, June 23, 1838, at St. John's Church in Lexington District, South Carolina, a "large concourse of spectators" assembled to witness the verbal duel between Pastors Miller and Hope. The topic was "the justness of the charges made against the Tennessee Synod by Dr. Bachman in his sermon on the Doctrines and Discipline of the Lutheran Church, delivered in Charleston, S. C., Nov. 1837." Pastor Hope, who was well-educated and a highly-skilled debater, must have accurately sized up the strengths and weaknesses of his opponent. Unfortunately, Miller failed to uphold the cause of the Tennessee Synod, as he "lost his temper and self-control to such an extent as to utterly unfit him for sober, dignified and successful discussion." The champion of the Tennessee Synod had been defeated badly, and Pastor Hope and his adherents were jubilant.⁶¹

During a recess between sessions, the Miller party was disconsolate. A change of strategy was necessary, else many felt the Tennessee Synod would be discredited completely in South Carolina. The only change possible was to replace Miller with the twenty-one-year-old, Abel J. Brown. When this proposal was offered to Pastor Hope's party, they readily accepted. They believed the best that the Tennessee Synod had to offer had been vanquished, and now they could defeat his understudy. South Carolina could then rid themselves of the Tennessee Synod forever, and serve to thwart any attempts by Dreher to withdraw his congregations.⁶²

Brown, who at that time was "little more than a beardless boy," was highly gifted with intelligence, had been educated at Emory and Henry, but was virtually unknown in the church outside Lincoln County. Furthermore, he had never actually been in a theological debate. Yet Brown reluctantly entered the debating stand, and adequately engaged Pastor Hope for three and one-half days. As the debate continued, the audience increased in number.⁶³

Pastor Hope emphasized that Dr. John Bachman of South Carolina, Dr. Samuel S. Schmucker of the Gettysburg Theological Seminary, and Dr. Benjamin Kurtz of the *Lutheran Observer* were the standard-bearers of Lutheranism in this country, and that the cries from western North Carolina and Tennessee were those of the "Henkelites" -- a sect to be avoided. Brown stood firmly on his beliefs, and defended them as ably as the young man's intellect and experience allowed. Many years after the heat of this encounter subsided, Brown calmly described these events:

While the disputants displayed deep earnestness throughout the debate, they kept cool, maintained their dignity, avoided personalities, and manifested a courteous, Christian, spirit, and the audience seemed to catch the inspiration of the same spirit.⁶⁴

As in most good debates, it was argued among the people as to the winner, and both sides claimed victory. Yet, the Tennessee Synod maintained its credibility, as throughout June and July, Brown continued to preach with Dreher in the South Carolina congregations.⁶⁵

Salem Church, Lincoln County, hosted the 1838 Tennessee Synod meeting, and Adam Miller and Frederick Smith represented St. John's. As matters of doctrine were included in Bachman's sermon, it was resolved that a stern answer should be prepared by Miller and Brown. This was duly composed and published. They believed that the highly-respected Dr. Bachman was misinformed or misguided in his understanding of the origins and teachings of the Tennessee Synod. The term "Henkelite" was viewed as suggesting a "sect," and therefore, was an inappropriate title. The sacramental misrepresentations were addressed directly, with liberal use of quotations from "illiterate" David Henkel's ("the great heresiarch himself") Treatises on the subjects. The Tennessee Synod did not teach that Baptism was regeneration, but rather a "means of regeneration," and utilized eleven pages to define the distinction. It did not teach "transubstantiation," but rather the communion of the body and blood of Christ with the sacramental elements, which consumed another fifteen pages. They further documented that Henkel's writings were in accord with those of Dr. Martin Luther, and that Luther's teachings agreed with Holy Scriptures. If Bachman and his "Bachmanites" of the South Carolina and General Synods did not believe and

61. Brown.

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Ibid. Life Sketches*, p. 30.

64. Brown. When Brown wrote this series of articles in 1891, he was in his eighties, and was probably the only pastor of this period still living.

Brown's Holston Synod had cooperated with the South Carolina Synod, and others, in formation of the United Synod of the South just a few years before. He would have had little motive to antagonize the South Carolina Synod anew. He somewhat questioned the judgement that the Tennessee Synod got involved at all.

65. *Ibid. Holcomb, Dreher Journal*, p. 43.

teach the Sacraments from this approach, Brown and Miller counter-charged them with "deviation" from the Lutheran faith. If the South Carolina pastors were bound to the Augsburg Confession also, why were they opposed to Tennessee?⁶⁶

No official public response came forth from South Carolina. Ultimately, after Dreher's voluntary removal from the South Carolina Synod, most of his congregations eventually withdrew, and several aligned with the Tennessee Synod, although Dreher remained independent from synodical connection.⁶⁷ Pastors Abel Brown, J. R. Peterson, and possibly others, made occasional trips into this region for a number of years.⁶⁸

Godfrey Dreher believed that his involvement in this series of events "checked the spirit of fanaticism and innovation upon the ancient doctrines and usages of the church." He further felt the confrontation back-fired:⁶⁹

The violent opposition with which they met, and the discussion which it elicited, served to convince the people, that the South Carolina Synod was adverse to the doctrines and usages of the Lutheran Church; for if not, why thus oppose a Synod which is confessedly one of Old School Lutherans?⁷⁰

While the South Carolina affairs were claiming the attention of the membership at St. John's by distracting its pastor to other regions, a second negative statement arrived from the north. The Virginia Synod published that she did "not recognize the members of our Synod as Evangelical Lutheran ministers." At the 1838 session, the Tennessee Synod Secretary was requested to also correspond with Virginia to determine the exact reasons for such a statement. By the following year, there was no reply, until the Virginia Synod Minutes were published. The Tennessee Synod then published its letter of inquiry, as well as a reply to the most recent action by Virginia.⁷¹ Virginia rescinded these remarks in 1853.⁷²

The examples of South Carolina and Virginia are typical of the disdain shown towards the Tennessee Synod. Even the North Carolina Reformed Classis, who regularly exchanged delegates with the North Carolina Synod, but not Tennessee, stated that Tennessee "is generally considered as being unsound in doctrine." After determination that Tennessee's ordinations were valid, the Reformed Classis did "not truly wish to sanction, or even connive at the doctrines now taught by the ministers of the Lutherans of Tennessee."⁷³ One can only imagine the outrage, when these attacks were publicly read to the congregation at St. John's. The reactions must have only spurred the motivations of their pastors and renewed their vigor, for this small band of Tennessee Synod pastors were committed to their cause, were tireless in their travels, and perpetuated their confessional message relentlessly.⁷⁴

In 1842, as the synodical contention somewhat subsided, P. C. Henkel was received as "Applicant" by the Tennessee Synod. Delegate John Yount was witness to this institution, and William Carpenter represented a new area congregation named "Piney Grove," which later became known as Bethel.⁷⁵ On September 30, 1843, Henkel was ordained as Deacon, and Timothy Moser, son of Daniel Moser, was received as an "Applicant", to be ordained as Deacon a year later.⁷⁶ The Henkel and Moser legacy continued. During the next few years, P. C. Henkel and Adam Miller both served as pastors to the St. John's Lutherans.

66. Brown, *Vindication*, p. 5.

67. Brown.

68. Holcomb, *Dreher Journal*, pp. 45, 51, 55, 64.

69. Dreher, p. 27.

70. *Ibid.* p. 16.

71. Henkel, pp. 95-97.

72. *TN Synod Minutes-1853*, p. 17.

73. *NC Reformed Classis Minutes*, 1835. It should not be expected that the Reformed Classis should agree with the doctrine of any Lutheran Synod.

74. It seems to be typical for the pastor or delegate to read the Synod Minutes to the congregations during this era. Proof of this is found at St. John's later, but has been seen at other churches during this period.

75. *TN Synod Minutes-1842*, pp. 4-5. Piney Grove, Zion, St. Peter's, and Miller's were represented by Abraham Hoke in 1845, and Piney Grove disappears from Synod lists for several years.

76. Henkel, pp. 105, 107.

Several of the founders of St. John's departed their earthly habitation during the "interim." The legible cemetery stones from 1831 through 1843 reveal the following fairly lengthy list of names, with dates of birth as early as 1752:77

Catharin Acerd	1759-1842
Martin Acert	1759-1830
John Cloninger	1781-1837
Connor (broken)	1827-1833
Margaret S. Connor	1832-1838
Orpha M. Deal	1838-1839
William Eckard	1780-1838
Simon Ekert	1768-1835
Margaret J. Harmon	1839-1840
David Henkel	1791-1831
John Herman	1800-1840
Alfred Herman	1824-1837
John Holler	1780-1837
Sally Hunsucker	1804-1835
Amanda M. Hunsucker	1827-1841
Jacob F. Hunsucker	1840-1843
William Hunsucker	1843-1843
Susan D. Hunsucker	1783-1843?
Mattie Ester Hunsucker	1777-1833?
Margaret A. Isenhower	1831-1831
Mary M. Kibler	1752-1833
Marry Ann Killian	1773-1833
E. M. Little	1783-1842
Christina Miller	1813-1832
Daniel Moser	1790-1839
John Null	1754-1831
E. Myrtle Rockett	1789-1838?
Sabine Rowe	1779-1841
Anna Setzer	1811-1843
Margaret Sigmon	1757-1842
Christopher Sigmon	1766-1841
Nelson E. Sigmon	1743-1832?
Mary Sipe	1782-1843
Jacob Sipe	1784-1843
Susan A. Smith	1836-1837
Daniel Stine	1788-1840
Fredrick Throneburgh	1753-1837
George Yount	1795-1842
Anna Yount	1821-1842
John A. Yount	1827-1830
Hesca A. Yount	1831-1832

More than forty deaths in this thirteen year period is a significant number, and sets the standard of comparison for later years at about three or so deaths per year. It is duly noted that many other St. John's members died during this era, but their remains were laid to rest in family cemeteries scattered about northern Lincoln County, their graves were unmarked, or most surviving stones are unreadable.

77. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, pp. 83-121. RCC: Mark had questions about some of these dates.

By 1837, the chief combatants resulting in the rupture of the North Carolina Synod had passed away, and Adam Miller sent a message promoting reconciliation, based on doctrinal standards set forth in the Bible, the Confessions, and the writings of Luther:

We heartily desire, that unanimity and christian fellowship should once more spread her delightful mantle over our beloved Zion, and we desire no more as a condition to Christian fellowship than a faithful adherence to the doctrine and discipline of our church. . . .

. . . we are willing to forgive all past offences; and if convinced of having given offence, we ask forgiveness; and that mutual love and forgiveness may once more bless our beloved church, is my unfeigned wish.⁷⁸

Miller's "unfeigned wish" was not to be. Just the opposite was about to occur due to unforeseen circumstances. The Lutheran Church would be split further, as scandal was about to befall the Tennessee Synod.

Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Hebrews 2:17

78. *TN Synod Minutes--1837*, p. 18.

Chapter 7

SCANDAL AND SCHISM

I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generations to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. Psalms 78 2-4

INTRODUCTION

Controversial issues are often glossed over by historians in a conciliatory manner, which is not an accurate representation of what actually occurred. G. D. Bernheim's *History of the German Settlements and the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina* covered this story briefly, however, as his book was written in 1883, he felt obliged to avoid the details. That which you are about to read, occupied about two pages in *The History of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod*, as written primarily from the Minutes by Socrates Henkel, in 1890. Obviously, this account was incomplete and biased. Other general Lutheran histories usually avoid this series of events, and offer little further insight.

Reverend C. O. Smith, in his presentations at the "St. John's Centennial" message of 1899, and at other messages up to fifty years later, refused to address this part of St. John's history with detail. The various histories seen on other area Lutheran Churches often omit the story in its entirety. Not a single modern Lutheran historian in any Synod, save Robert C. Carpenter, Bessemer City, North Carolina, is known to have offered this story in any manner approaching completeness and candor.

Failure to include the "dark" events at St. John's in the 1840's is inconsistent with the example of the psalmist cited above. Failure to include the story with sufficient detail would not properly explain the Lutheran congregational problems that vexed the Church for a full century.

Nobody likes controversy; however, a century and one-half has passed, and old wounds have healed or have been completely forgotten. The affected parties, their close allies, and close relatives have long since departed this earth. It is likely that a small minority of the current membership of St. John's is even aware of this story, as it was a period deemed "best forgotten" by the generations that preceded us. As an introduction, this author has an ancestor (Frederick Smith) who was directly involved by name in these matters, and has no feelings relative to his forefather's actions, wrong or right. It is truly believed that the reader would, under similar circumstances, feel likewise. The minutes of the congregational meetings during this period would serve to provide great insight into the issues, but these records (or that of another congregation involved in this dispute) are not known to exist. Perhaps this is better, as the tale can be told from sources outside the St. John's family, with bountiful documentation from within the family. Notwithstanding, it is the intent of the author to fairly present the story, as gathered primarily from two obviously-biased publications, and similarly-biased books and pamphlets written much later, without intended prejudice towards one faction or the other, and without acknowledgment of guilt or presumption of innocence.

This chapter contains many lengthy quotes. A decision had to be made whether to abstract from these quotes in the sake of brevity. In many cases, it was deemed appropriate that length was not the primary issue, and that this portion of St. John's Lutheran history should be offered as complete as the available documentation (much of which is quite rare) would allow.

The next time it occurs to you that there are two St. Paul's Lutheran Churches in the Startown area, or that there are three Lutheran Churches at the same intersection on Springs Road near Hickory, remember this story. After this lengthy introduction, the story begins.

Why does one ever repeat such stories? History! And the words of the Psalmist!

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1 Corinthians 1:10

"Scandal" and "schism" are two of the dirtiest words in the history of a church. The foulest of the foul. The most hateful of the hateful. The vilest of the vile. St. John's found itself in the middle of both words! "Schism" is roughly defined as "division," "split," "separation," "discord," "disharmony," or "formal division in or separation from a church or religious body." To the St. John's Lutherans, all the various definitions apply to the events of this Chapter.

Although the early St. John's story was intended to be presented chronologically, this issue would not allow it. Differences between pastors of a "Union" Church, and their respective loyal supporters, were instrumental in the division of the St. John's Lutheran congregation. In a closely-knit church community, where many families were inter-married and lived in close proximity, such division not only affected the church, but caused ill-feelings among families, friends, and neighbors. Its effects later resounded into the Lutheran Church in North Carolina, especially the Tennessee Synod, and spread to other states. The churches of Lincoln, Gaston, and Catawba Counties were the center of attention.

The regular Lutheran Pastor at St. John's was still Adam Miller. This was the Adam Miller (Jr.) who was licensed as Deacon at St. John's in 1825, and who was ordained a year later by David Henkel, Daniel Moser, Ambrose Henkel, Christian Moretz, Adam Miller, Sr., and Jacob Zink. He was among the first "apostles" of the Tennessee Synod, and had absorbed its principles by way of instruction from his uncle Adam, and from David Henkel in the German language in 1829. During the past years, he had faithfully served most of the Catawba Valley congregations vacated by the death of David Henkel. During this period he baptized many children, confirmed many youth, married many couples, and presided over many funerals. His "consoling" presence was well-established, and he was well-known and highly-regarded by his faithful flock and his peers in the Tennessee Synod.

David Henkel's son, P. C., was now an adult, and began his career by teaching in a school near his home. In 1843, he commenced his quest towards the ministry, received theological instruction from Rev. J. R. Moser, and began to preach to the St. John's congregation sporadically, beginning with his second sermon. For the next three years, he made an occasional preaching appearance, although not yet an ordained minister.¹

In 1845, an unmarried Lincoln County woman named Catharine Anthony had a child outside of wedlock. In this era, the unwed mother was required to name the father to the courts. The State then assessed the father an amount for "child support," and thus avoided the welfare costs for illegitimate children. The father would then acquire a "Bastardy Bond" which would require others to bond themselves to guarantee that the father would "keep the county free from a base born child." Miss Anthony, in presence of a magistrate, refused to name the father, and was charged, was convicted, and paid her fine to the State for her silence.²

Rumors soon surfaced and quickly spread that Rev. Adam Miller was the child's father. Miller, who was married with a promising family, denied the charges.

On May 11, church members John Shell and W. W. McGinnas visited George Anthony's house to question his daughter Catharine as to the child's father. Shell later testified that Miss Anthony stated, "that the child was not Miller's, that if she was mean enough to have a child by a married man, she would not take a preacher." McGinnas also reported Anthony's statement, that she "did not know Miller from a woman, only from his outward appearance."³

Three days later, in presence of Lincoln County Magistrate Moses M. Roberts, and Beaver Dam member Jacob Aderhold, Anthony signed the following written statement:

May, 14, 1845

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1. *P. C. Henkel Diary*, transcription, no author named, no page numbers, year 1843-1845.
 2. Lincoln County Court of Pleas and Quarters, June Session 1845, "State vs. Catharine Anthony, N. C. State Archives, Box CR060.301.13.
 3. *Report of the Transactions of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized, During its Fourth Session Held in St. James' Church, Greene County, East Tennessee, from Monday the 27th, to Thursday the 30th Day of October 1851, and A Defence of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized, or a Reply to a Vindication, as Appended to the Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod (So Called), as Published by Authority of That Body in 1850, by Rev. Adam Miller, Minister of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, hereinafter referred to as The Defence, (Greeneville, TN, 1852), p. 96.* This is the primary document describing the history of this story from the perspective of Adam Miller and the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized.

1. the undersigned, do certify that my infant child born on the 21st day of February 1845 that it is not the offspring of Adam Miller. And that I have neither directly or indirectly charged him with the same. Neither would it be correct, if I were to do so.

Given from under my hand the day and year above written.

Witness,
Moses M. Roberts
her
CATHARINE X ANTHONY
mark
Jacob Aderhold4

A month later, the Lincoln County courts returned the fine previously imposed on Anthony for failure to disclose the child's father. Apparently, they had received a private disclosure or uncovered other evidence against Rev. Miller, and preferred charges against him.⁴

Even armed with the emphatic written disclosure from Anthony, Miller was in an uncomfortable personal and professional predicament. Going to court would be defamatory, even if he were cleared of the charges. Conviction would render a legal opinion that Catharine Anthony lied before a magistrate, and that Rev. Miller had violated the sixth commandment. His churches and the young Tennessee Synod would surely be embarrassed by such publicity.

Miller and/or his churches immediately sprang into action. A preliminary meeting was held at a hotel in Lincolnton, at which time arrangements were made to investigate the charges against Miller. Persons were appointed to collect evidence pertinent to the case.⁵

On June 27, 1845, the scheduled meeting was called to order at Daniel's Church in presence of "hundreds of persons." It was deemed "inexpedient, under the circumstances of the case, to go into the trial." Benjamin S. Johnson, Esq. proposed, and Adam Miller agreed, that Miller "should remain silent in his office, until the legal investigation in court should have taken place." Synod leaders were complimentary of Adam Miller's submission to this request, and the crowd suggests that the congregations were restless with the situation.⁶

Upon Miller's encouragement, a second meeting was set up at Trinity Church on July 25, where Miller faced the Elders of his congregations with somewhat less fanfare. Synod leaders claimed that Miller had "become dissatisfied with the disposition" of the Daniel's Church meeting.⁷ One of the principal witnesses was W. W. McGinnas, a neighbor, a witness to Catharine Anthony's statement, and an upstanding citizen in the community. Ultimately, the verdict of the elders, as signed by Chairman Daniel Seagle, was stated as follows:

The committee after having heard all the evidence adduced in the forgoing case, both for and against the accused, find unanimously, that the said Adam Miller is not guilty as charged. And are further of the opinion that there is no cause why the accused should not resume his official labors.⁸

At this meeting, Miller claimed to have been "acquitted . . . without a dissenting voice," after which he began preaching again. The Synod discounted the credibility of this "trial." They believed that the Elders present had received no express power from their churches to conduct such a trial, and had acted "upon their own individual authority." The Synod denied "that Mr. Miller was fully and fairly tried in the meeting at Trinity Church," argued that this was a "one sided trial," that "little of the evidence against him was fairly before that

4. Lincoln County Court of Pleas and Quarters, June Session 1845, "State vs. Catharine Anthony," N. C. State Archives, Box CR060.301.13.

5. *The Defence*, p. 22. *Report of the transactions of a Called Session of a portion of the Members of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Held in Cooner's Church, Augusta County, Va., April 7th, 1850*, hereinafter referenced *Vindicated*, publisher unknown, 1850, p. 17. This publication contains "Proceedings of the Evang. Lutheran Tennessee Synod, in the Rev. Adam Miller, Vindicated," and is the primary document describing this history from the perspective of the Tennessee Synod.

6. *The Defence*, pp. 17-18. *Vindicated*, pp. 23-24. One source cites the date as June 29.

7. *Vindicated*, p. 18.

8. *The Defence*, pp. 95-96.

meeting," and that witnesses against Miller were not present. Synod leaders suspected "that Mr. Miller had a strong reason for urging on that trial, unfair as it might be. He is a crafty, designing man. He well knew the strong hold he had on the affections and sympathies of his Elders, as well as his church members generally, and that by hastening them, unprepared, into trial, he could be cleared." As many of these Elders later changed their position, there is some merit to these assertions. They further felt that Miller was "in direct violation of his own agreement," by resuming his labors "before his case was decided in court." When the adequacy of the Elders' meeting was challenged by a Synod leader, Miller replied that he was "guilty of a corrupt falsehood. He would have me submit to the devil, an office which belongs to God."⁹

Another semi-private meeting was called, in the house of Daniel Lutz, with delegates from Miller's congregations in attendance. As the disposition of the court case was a serious affair, this meeting was deemed inconclusive, and it was decided to have an additional meeting among the Elders.¹⁰

On September 2, 1845, a formally-announced meeting of the Elders was held at B. S. Johnson's Esq., in Lincolnton. The purpose was to determine the congregations' input, whether Miller should proceed with, or withdraw himself from, the upcoming lawsuit. Mr. Frederick Smith attended from St. John's, and voted in the majority of 5 to 2, that Miller not pursue the legal matter.¹¹

Up to this point, the congregations and their elders had taken the proper responsibility of managing their own affairs regarding their Pastor. This is precisely as intended by the congregationally-oriented Constitution of the Tennessee Synod. This did not prevent the Tennessee Synod from becoming involved.

Synod held its annual meeting beginning October 6, 1845. Miller attended, felt absolved by the Elders of his congregations, and later stated that he had wished to make amends with his peers. However, "it appeared in Synod that considerable dissatisfaction existed in the churches in N. C., in reference to Mr. Miller's case."¹² One party defended Miller, and another took the opposite point of view. The Tennessee Synod minutes report the following from this meeting:

Whereas a charge of a serious nature is alleged against the Rev. Adam Miller, and as this Synod is not a judiciary, but an advisory body, and simply claims the right of imparting her useful advice, and employing the proper means for the purpose of promulgating the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and inasmuch as a majority of his elders have held a meeting, and have investigated the charge alleged against him; and said meeting of elders, after an investigation of the charge, unanimously declared him innocent; and they see no cause why he should not resume his official labors; and as a respectable number of the members of his congregations concur with the decision of the elders; however, as there still seems to be a dissatisfaction existing in the matter, it is

Resolved, That the Revs. H. Goodman and J. Killian be appointed to take the voice of his congregations in a clear and distinct manner, as soon as possible, and if the voice of the congregations wish him to continue his official duties, that we, in that case, concur with them, provided they honorably acquit him.¹³

At this meeting, the Tennessee Synod plainly stated that it was not a judiciary body--a statement for which they would be taken to task. Technically, neither was it a legislative body, and it was later argued that the resolution above was not within the constitutional authority of the Synod.

The words "provided they honorably acquit him," referring to the various congregations, are ascribed by Miller to Deacons P. C. Henkel and J. R. Peterson. Miller claimed a conflict of interest, and that these two young preachers

were to reap the benefits of my condemnation. They were doubtless aiming at the loaves and fishes, together with the determination never to submit to the cross of their brother. And the dissatisfaction which existed, was, in my humble opinion, the result of clerical influence, in a great degree.¹⁴

9. *The Defence*, pp. 25, 94. *Vindicated*, pp. 18-20.

10. *The Defence*, p. 37.

11. *Ibid*.

12. *The Defence*, p. 26. *Vindicated*, p. 20.

13. *The Defence*, p. 32. *Vindicated*, pp. 20-21. *Tennessee Synod Minutes, 1845*, p. 8.

14. *The Defence*, p. 33.

All appearances, at this time, were that the Synod would allow the various congregations to decide this issue, except for possibly that last qualifying phrase. Whether of personal jealousy, ecclesiastical prejudice, "loaves and fishes," or pure coincidence, P. C. Henkel assured that the Miller case would be decisive, and ultimately divisive at St. John's, by his insistence on the final phrase.

As Miller had been acquitted by his Churches by way of the vote of their delegates or Elders, the congregational vote was considered by Miller to be an "ex post facto law," and not in accordance with the Constitution of the Synod. However, Miller was confident enough in his congregations that he consented to this resolution, even with the qualification statement.¹⁵

At the 1845 Synod meeting, Miller was advised by Ambrose Henkel, Jacob Killian, and Jacob Stirewalt, together with Dr. G. S. Henkel

to continue the suit. That the slander was not against me as an individual, but against the body [the Tennessee Synod]; they also promised to assist me in defraying the cost of said suit, and that it should be better for me if I lost the suit; that it would show that I contended for my right to the utmost.

Thus encouraged, I prosecuted the suit at their request, . . .¹⁶

So in contradiction to the majority vote of the Elders of his various congregations, several respected pastors of the Tennessee Synod convinced Miller to pursue the legal matter, and attempt to defend himself against a virtually indefensible allegation.

Prior to the Synod-resolved congregational vote, Miller returned to his congregations to explain this position of the Synod, and advised them that it "was a matter of conscience and that for Christ's sake, that they should turn out and vote," regardless of his feelings. Furthermore, he stated, "That I should respect the man who voted against me the same as the one who voted for me," and, "That I view their decision as from God."¹⁷

Pursuant to the Synod's resolution, in the latter part of 1845, the Reverends Goodman and Killian visited St. John's, whereupon the vote was 28 "for" and 1 "against." Miller and his congregations were assured by the Synod and its representatives that this vote would be final in this tedious matter.¹⁸

Oct. 10th, 1850

This is to certify that I was present at St. John's Church, when the Rev. Goodman and Killian were to take the vote of the congregations in accordance with the Resolution of Synod in 1845—in the first place the Rev. Goodman read the resolution and explained the object of their visit. He pressing solicited all to come forward and do their duty—as the decision then to be made as to be a final one. If you now raise Mr. Miller he is raised; and if you put him down he is down. Then Mr. M. Rudisill rose and asked the question whether this was to be depended upon as a final end of the matter? Mr. Goodman replied; yes it is. Given under my hand, the day and date above written.

ANDREW HOKE

The above is substantially confirmed, (with this addition, They were instructed to vote with a written ticket preach or no preach) by the following brethren.

MILES M. C'NUP
LAWSON HUNSECKER
HENRY HUNSECKER
WM. FULBRIGHT
GEO. P. SIGMAN
FRED A. HOKE
JOHN A HOKE¹⁹

15. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 38. Jacob Stirewalt later denied making this statement to Miller.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-35.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

Most other churches served by Miller, voted similarly, with the vote from all Miller's congregations totaling 127 "for" and 24 "against." The congregational canvas was completed prior to November 26, 1845, when Reverend Jacob Killian released these results in writing to Miller; however, the Synod later argued that Miller "had no certificate from the Rev. Messrs. Goodman and Killian to that effect."²⁰

Only 29 votes from St. John's suggests a possible problem within the congregation. This small voter tally does not seem to be a representative vote of the entire membership of the, then, large congregation at St. John's -- particularly over a controversial issue.

Miller's case finally appeared in the December session of Lincoln County Court in 1845. The primary witness, Catharine Anthony, charged Miller under oath as being the father of the child, which under North Carolina law served as "prima facie" evidence in the case.²¹ There were a total of twelve witnesses, who provided testimony for the State, and ten testified in Miller's behalf. Several members of the Anthony family testified for and against Miller, and Moses Roberts and W. W. McGinnas were witnesses for both parties. The jury did not "honorably acquit him," to borrow a phrase from the Tennessee Synod minutes, but rather found "that the defendant is the father of the child, as he stands charged," and sentenced him to furnish the aforementioned "Bastardy Bond" for support of the illegitimate child. When a motion for a new trial was overruled, Miller issued notice of appeal, which was granted. There is no documentation that an appeal was actually pursued by Miller, but rather, he acceded to the State, and paid the yearly "allowance" to Catharine Anthony for the next several years, and in February of 1846, the Court costs of \$69.22.²²

One may never know the results of the congregational canvases, had they been held a few months later, and after the judgment of the Lincoln County Courts, but the court case must have taken a great toll on the congregation. In early 1846, the entire board of Elders at St. John's resigned, and on the second Sunday in June, Miller installed new ones into office. Henkel concluded that Miller was "determined to preach as long as he can get any hearers and from attempts that he is making [sic] it appears that he would ruin, if it were in his power, every church in which he has formerly preached. . . . for it appears like there is no good intention about the man at all [sic], he still continues to ask all the counsel he can and obeys none. . . . I cannot help but read his conduct occasional, and to compare it with, what is said in 2 Tim. 3 ch. etc." St. John's was not the only congregation having these problems.²³

Prior to the next Synod meeting, certainly fueled by the legal decision, rumors emerged that the Adam Miller case would be re-opened at that time. Miller reports that he met with P. C. Henkel, and "laid the consequences of such a course of conduct before him."

I [Miller] said to him [Henkel] that if they could not conscientiously believe anything else, but that I was guilty, for Christ's sake to forgive and have mercy upon me, and let the matter end, and be at peace.

He [Henkel] replied in the most ambitious manner. "We cannot forgive an innocent man." He paused a moment and said "Mr. Miller, we can have no mercy upon you, it [the request] reminds me of a man under the gallows with the rope around his neck crying to the bystanders for mercy."

This is the merciless manner in which I [Miller] was treated by a pretended minister of Christ.²⁴

Animosity between St. John's full-time and occasional Lutheran preachers requires no further interpretation. These emotions spread themselves at the Tennessee Synod meeting, held at Daniel's Church in Lincoln County, on October 17, 1846.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 35. *Vindicated*, p. 21. Apparently, Miller only had a written statement from Killian, and the comment of the Tennessee Synod appears to be worded in a misleading manner. Also, the letter from Killian may not have been in the form of a "certificate."

21. *The Defence*, p. 98. Letter from P. Hoke to Ambrose Henkel, dated July 31, 1847, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. Hoke was present at the trial and later made the statement, "No one could swear it positively, the woman excepted. . . ."

22. Lincoln County Court of Pleas and Quarters, December Session 1845, "State vs. Adam Miller," N. C. State Archives, Box CR060.301.13.

23. Letter from P. C. Henkel to Socrates Henkel, published in *Catawba Cousins*, Vol. 8, No. 2. (Nov/Dec. 1993), p. 24. Original document is located in the Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. The reader with the slightest question as to Henkel's opinion of Miller should read the quoted scriptures.

24. *The Defence*, p. 39.

Beneath the personal differences, the Tennessee Synod faced an unprecedented dilemma, as presented in Article IV of its Constitution, which was an undeniable statement of congregational and individual liberties:

The business of this body shall be to impart their useful advice, to employ the proper means for the purpose of promulgating the gospel of Jesus Christ, to detect and expose erroneous doctrines, and false teachers. . . . But this Synod shall have no power to receive appeals from the decisions of, nor to make rules, nor regulations for congregations.²⁵

A remark annexed to the Constitution elaborates that "every congregation have [sic] the privilege of choosing fit persons for their ministers." The Tennessee Synod had no constitutional authority for discipline of a pastor except in cases of false teaching, as it was clearly the responsibility of each congregation to make these decisions without synodical interference.

The Synod had encountered only a few similar difficulties in its twenty-five year existence. Their past practice consisted of removal of a pastor from their rolls when he joined another Synod, and even one of these was re-instituted years later. When charges were leveled by Rev. Nehemiah Bonham against Rev. W. C. Rankin in 1832 for doctrine and practice contrary to the Augsburg Confession, in accordance with the Constitution, the "erroneous doctrines" were exposed, and Rankin voluntarily withdrew a year later. Rev. Andrew Sechrist was charged with "crimes of a serious nature" in 1836, and the letter was read before Synod. Sechrist claimed that he was not prepared to meet the charges, voluntarily agreed to cease preaching, and "in a short time left the synod in a very abrupt manner." He was reported to have retired to a neighboring establishment, where he was seen partaking of strong beverage, thus "leaving the Synod in a disgraceful manner." The Synod resolved to lay the matter over until the next Synod meeting, when Sechrist's name was removed from the clerical roster. When Rev. Daniel S. Schoolfield was charged, his congregation decided the issue, he did not appear at Synod to defend himself, and was thus removed from the clerical roster after a committee examined the congregation's actions.²⁶ The Synod seems to have acted in general accordance with the intent of Article IV in these three instances. Such was not the case with Adam Miller.

Amid other scandalous charges against a Rev. J. W. Hull, who was undergoing domestic difficulties with his wife, the 1846 Synod meeting turned to the Adam Miller case, which it deemed "unfinished business from the previous session."²⁷ In attendance, Miller felt in spite of his Court conviction, that the approval of congregational elders, the resolution of the 1845 Synod meeting, and the results of canvassing of his congregations were reasonable vindication. Further inquiry should be unnecessary and inappropriate for a self-proclaimed advisory body. He certainly also remembered the rumors that had been in circulation and his specific verbal altercation with P. C. Henkel, and probably had a fair idea that his wishes were not to come true.

The Synod determined that the results of Miller's congregations were not in favor of his preaching, since he "could not have been honorably acquitted by his congregations, under any circumstances, whilst there was sufficient evidence of his guilt." Furthermore, the Synod questioned that his congregational vote was legitimate on several counts. "Some of them (churches) had already dismissed Mr. Miller, and one had gone so far as to lock him out. Of course the voice of these churches was against him." There may have been "an unwillingness to assume the responsibility of casting their votes," as Miller was well-liked and had a "virtuous wife and a rising and promising family." Another issue that may have reduced the voting was presented as "an inability to vote intelligently upon the question involved," as the Synod had no reason to believe that the evidence was fully and fairly presented to the congregations. Who could know for certain whether Miller was the child's father? With the rampant rumors, both pro and con, "could churches, under these circumstances, vote intelligently?" And finally, the Synod charged that "the people did not vote, because they wished to see the result of the legal investigation of Mr. Miller's case in court."²⁸

Miller denied any insinuation of impropriety in the congregational canvas. The Synod was questioned as to "whether the vote of the congregations was a compliance with the resolution of 1845." As it had been widely

25. *TN Synod Minutes - 1828*, pp. 7-8.

26. Henkel, pp. 70, 82, 83, 87, 89, 91, 96, 109, 110. *The Defence*, p. 89.

27. *The Defence*, pp. 29-30. Henkel, pp. 113, 115.

28. *Vindicated*, pp. 23-24.

proclaimed that the congregational vote would "clinch the matter," Miller claimed that this question was generally evaded by the Synod leaders, by the president's statement, "I do not understand the matter."²⁹

After two days of "discussion," which Miller described as "evasion," Mr. Michael Rudisill, Miller's father-in-law, and "his devoted personal friend," moved that "Mr. W. W. McGinnas be appointed to give a relation of all the circumstances relative to the charge against the Rev. A. Miller." As McGinnas was one of the original interviewers of Anthony, was of the same community as Anthony, and had previously offered his insight on both the State's and Miller's sides at the court and church "trials," his selection would seem to have been in Miller's favor.³⁰

The Synod "was not, in view of the facts stated, convinced of his innocence, and could not therefore believe that he had been honorably acquitted by his congregations."³¹ Therefore, the resolution from the previous Synod was not considered to have been satisfied.

Miller's version of these proceedings is quite different from that of the Synod:

The Synod unquestionably intended forthwith to enter into another trial! Such a course of conduct is sufficient to convince any honest man that there was not one spark of moral honesty intended by them. Upon which I withdrew my connection from their illegal proceedings. Being determined not to be tried by a body of men not authorized to try, and one which had disqualified itself for this duty, by a determination never to cease trying until I was condemned. A man might as well submit to be tried by the devil, as he never ceases trying, until he has condemned the subject.³²

And had they been governed by the statement of Mr. McGinnas they could not have avoided deciding in my favor.³³

When Miller "withdrew," Synod deemed it unnecessary to take further action relative to the matter at that time.³⁴

Reverend Miller later wrote about this session, "'I am given up to the devil', sentence is pronounced by his holiness Rev. P. C. Henkel, as follows: 'I will give him up to the devil.'" Miller continued:

. . . do you not think that there was a tremendous roar of laughter and mirth in the infernal regions, when this liberal hearted young clergyman gave up so fat a prize to his old friend, his Satanic majesty; and when the Synod of 1847, confirmed this sentence? This is just what his Satanic majesty delights to see.

But thanks be to God, there is a better owner for me, . . . if the members of the Tennessee Synod, will refuse to fellowship me there [heaven], they must seek some place that suits them better, I cannot help it.³⁵

Had an angel come down from heaven and testified in my innocence, they would not have believed him.³⁶

Such was the adamant Miller concerning his innocence and bitterness towards Henkel and the Tennessee Synod leaders. The discord between the two Lutheran pastors at St. John's is painfully obvious by their artful use of the English language. The Synod minutes reported that "Mr. Michael Rudisill, an Elder of St. Paul's Church, Catawba County, North Carolina, and also Messrs. Ephraim Shell, Daniel Rader, and John Hass withdrew themselves and the congregations they represented." Ephraim Shell represented St. John's. Adam Miller argued that "individuals acted for the Churches," and that the churches did not withdraw, as withdrawal from Synod required congregational action, and not that of a single delegate.³⁷

29. *The Defence*, pp. 41, 99.

30. *The Defence*, pp. 30, 39. *Vindicated*, p. 21. Henkel, pp. 112, 113. Lincoln County Minute Docket County Court, June 1842-Dec. 1845, "State vs. Adam Miller," N. C. State Archives, Box CR060.301.13.

31. *Vindicated*, p. 22.

32. *The Defence*, p. 30.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

34. Henkel, p. 113.

35. *The Defence*, p. 31.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 108. Henkel, p. 113. Whether a duly-elected delegate had the authority to withdraw his congregation is unclear, but normally, such an important matter would have been expected to have been returned to the congregation for its vote.

Less-heated 1846 Synod activities proved to exacerbate the congregational problems, as Deacons P. C. Henkel and J. R. Peterson were fully ordained into the ministry.³⁸

These transactions did not meet with the satisfaction of all observers. In July of 1847, a letter was mailed from Col. P. Hoke, of Lincolnton, to Ambrose Henkel in New Market, Virginia. Hoke was present at the civil court hearing and subsequent events. The following are excerpts from his lengthy account and opinions in the Miller case.

... according to our laws a strumpet had all the power in as much as she can swear on whom she pleases, and fixes the guilt unless he proves an alibi [sic]. The trial was strong in spots and other spots in it was [sic] weak. I heard the trial and would not for the world swear Miller guilty. My main object however is to show that in the Synodical trial of the case our Constitution was grossly violated. . . . Twenty elders had convened and say they heard the witnesses on oath, for & against. Miller and brot [sic] a verdict of "not guilty;" the Church concurring [sic], here this matter should have ended. . . . My notions about Honorable may be erroneous but would suppose that a majority of ??? [127] out of 151 votes should be entitled to the appellation of "Honourable." . . . My understanding was that, Miller should be reinstated provided he was sustained by the congregations. He was sustained. As shown above, and am unable to find any doctrine in the constitution which will justify the conduct of the Synod. . . . We will, for the sake of argument, admit Miller is guilty, and according to scriptures, my notion is, we must pardon him. . . . There is a possibility, or probability, that Miller is guilty of the charge. No one could swear it positively, the woman excepted, and she had certified on paper that M. was not the father of the child. Some suppose she was threatened "that if she did not charge Miller she would have to leave home." There are various opinions concerning the matter. . . . When I see his very nice family I could shed tears, and as a Christian I know that it is Christian like to be of a pardoning disposition.³⁹

As the congregational canvas was not considered an honorable acquittal, Miller set forth during the year to garner all the support possible in preparation for yet another year's Synodical confrontation. Recently-ordained P. C. Henkel learned of Miller's petition drive, and alerted his Uncle, the same Rev. Ambrose Henkel, regarding the activities in Catawba, Lincoln, and Gaston Counties:

I assure you we have had many difficulties to encounter in this section of country since I saw you and had to devote our attention to fight the devil and his emissaries . . . I assure you that the prosperity of our churches depend very much on the action of the ensuing session of Synod and infact [sic] the very existence of the Tenn. Synod much depends upon the course it may pursue at its next session. Mr. Miller is trying to tum every stone upside down he comes across and if possible he will tumble into Synod and if he does and is not tumbled out again Synod is gone. He is trying to get petitions from every quarter he posably [sic] can to bring his case into Synod again. He intends to have a delegation at Synod, probably one from each of the following churchs [sic] viz St. John's, Paul's, Hasses [sic] and Millers Churches and also from some few other parties he has started up elsewhere. . . . Miller says that the last session was composed of all young men and they did not do him justice, that they violated the constitution -- acted contrary to Scripture, etc.⁴⁰

The two letters to Ambrose Henkel summarize and typify the polarity in feelings of many members of Adam Miller's congregations, as people were either completely sympathetic or outraged. The letters clearly indicate the cruel difficulties facing the pastor, his family, the people, and the congregations. Should a Christian have followed Hoke's suggestion in the exercising of charity in such cases? Or was a pastor expected to maintain a higher standard of personal behavior than his parishioners, and thus, lead his flock by personal example? When Adam Miller appeared with one of his petitions, should a church member have endorsed him with a signature, or have resisted him as an evil-doer and adulterer?

How should a Christian congregation have dealt with such issues? Should it have ousted its Pastor based on vicious rumor, circumstantial evidence, and the unconvincing proceedings of a civil court? As Miller was never accused of preaching a word contrary to the Bible or the Lutheran Confessions, should the congregation have offered the right hand of fellowship and continued to receive the means of grace in the Word and Sacraments as it had done for the past fifteen years? Or should the congregation have made its decisions calculated to best serve the

38. Henkel, p. 113.

39. Letter from P. Hoke to Ambrose Henkel, previously cited.

40. Letter from P. C. Henkel to Ambrose Henkel, published in *Catawba Cousins*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 25-26. Original is located in Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

membership and collective well-being, notwithstanding the whirl-wind of personal influences and sentiments? The religious and moral questions were many, and the correct and proper answers were unclear. St. John's was faced with the tragic and impossible circumstance of arriving at answers acceptable to all members.

In so doing, St. John's was also cruelly forced to choose between Miller and Henkel as their pastor. They chose both sympathy and outrage, Miller and Henkel, and the schism became reality! From the journal of P. C. Henkel, he began "preaching regular" at St. John's on the third Sunday of June, 1847, at a rate of about ten sermons per year. This service was to only a portion of the congregation, as Miller continued to serve his adherents.⁴¹

Miller received word "not to lay these petitions before the Synod." A public notice was sent out "that the subject would not be discussed." However, letters with over 400 signatories were received by the Tennessee Synod, and were discussed at its 1847 meeting in Sullivan County, Tennessee. The following is a petition of protest to the previous transactions, with area church signatures:

August, 22nd, 1847

We the undersigned having attended the session of the Tennessee Synod at Daniel's Church in 1846; and having carefully observed their proceedings in the case of Rev. A. Miller, we are convinced that they have no scriptural, nor constitutional authority for their proceedings. Their conduct was arbitrary, self-willed and according to their prepossessions against Miller; clearly manifesting a predetermination to effect his [Miller's] downfall, and utter disgrace, regardless of propriety or consequences; in open violation of the resolution of the Synod in 1845. Their open hostility and determination to effect his ruin, have only an equal in the proceedings of the Generalists against the Rev. D. Henkel, and the cause he labored in. We are members of the Lutheran Church, and can believe no other doctrine, and expect to die Lutherans: Notwithstanding we have withdrawn our names from the illegal and arbitrary proceedings of that body, and we intend to remain as we now are, unless the Synod return to the constitution and the principals of the Lutheran Church. Which we hope they may do.

Jonathan Carpenter,
Michael Neas,
Joseph Heistler,
John Eisenhour,
Ephraim Shell,
John Shuford,
Michael Rudisill,
Daniel Rader,
John Hass,
Jacob Howser,
Daniel Lutz,
Wm. Greer,
Henry Eamey,
Wm. Green,
Jonas Carpenter.⁴²

The name of Ephraim Shell again represents the congregation of St. John's, and Rudisill, Haas, and Rader accompanied Adam Miller when he exited the 1846 meeting. From this petition, many other delegates felt similarly but felt obligated to remain at the meeting and represent their congregations. Among other churches represented by this petition were Miller's, St. Paul's, Hass's, Trinity-Vale, Daniel's, Warlick's, and several from Tennessee. The various petitions were placed into three general categories:

1. Withdrawals of various congregations, as represented by the letter above;
2. Letters stating that the Synod had acted contrary to its constitution in the Miller case, with threat of withdrawal if this action was not

41. *P. C. Henkel Diary* - 1847-1851.

42. *The Defence*, pp. 40-41, 45.

reversed; and

3. Letters, including those by P. C. and Ambrose Henkel, affirming the actions of the Synod at its 1846 conference, with the threat of withdrawal

if the Synod "receive the said Miller again into its connection."⁴³

Reverend George Easterly submitted an emphatic letter in opposition, which was placed into category two, as it used scriptural references to point out the failure of the Tennessee Synod to follow its own constitution in its previous session's handling of the Miller affair. Since Easterly was the only remaining founding father of the Tennessee Synod, was present when the constitution was ratified in 1828, and had staunchly defended the synod against the assaults of others, this letter should have been seriously considered. Rather, it was read "without note or comment."⁴⁴

The Tennessee Synod stated that the Miller subject was "freely discussed" at this meeting. However, Miller relates that the Rev. A. J. Brown repeatedly said, "that discussion would not be admitted, that it would take three days to discuss the subject fully." Miller then accused the Synod of publishing "to the world, in their minutes, the nefarious and corrupt falsehood that the subject had been discussed freely." If Miller had objection to the actions of the Tennessee Synod, he was instructed to submit them in writing.⁴⁵

A Synod committee was formed to study the divergent attitudes of the petitions, and its report generally agreed with the third set of letters, with the following recommendation, which was:

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Synod, the Synod has not, in its former proceedings, in reference to the charges against the Rev. Adam Miller, violated either its Constitution or the Holy Scriptures, and cannot therefore disannul its proceedings.⁴⁶

The Synod would not allow Miller to present his case, if he were going to speak against the actions of the Tennessee Synod, which were precisely his intentions.

Seeing that nothing could be done to effect peace with them on christian terms: myself and friends did our whole duty to prevent a schism in the body from which we were compelled to take our leave. For who can make peace, with those who are determined to have no peace, except such as would be equal to death itself, morally speaking. For had I been an angel from heaven, much more a sinful mortal, as I am, by such a course of conduct, they could effect my condemnation.

I was now compelled to take my final leave of them under the absolute conviction that the principles of the synod had been violated in the most shameful and sinful manner, and they were determined to persist in their course of conduct.⁴⁷

Adam Miller "bade them adieu, and departed."⁴⁸

The Tennessee Synod stated, "We however, have our opinions, founded upon the evidence in the case, and with this opinion, under the peculiarities of the case, we cannot consistently, with a sense of duty, fellowship Mr. M. and his party."⁴⁹ The committee recommendation was passed with two dissenting votes.⁵⁰

Frederick Smith, one of the Elders on the original Church trial, was delegate at this meeting, and presented a letter:

. . . is a petition from St. John's Church, North Carolina, in which the petitioners inform Synod, that at the last session of our Synod, their delegate, without authority, withdrew their church from our connection, and pray that they may still be considered as belonging to the Synod.⁵¹

43. Henkel, pp. 115-116.

44. *The Defence*, p. 46.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

46. Henkel, p. 116.

47. *The Defence*, p. 48.

48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*, p. 21. *Vindicated*, p. 17.

50. *TN Synod Minutes-1847*.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Synod responded:

Resolved, that we recognize St. John's Church, North Carolina, as standing in connection with the Tennessee Synod.52

Miller remained pastor of one congregation of the divided St. John's Lutherans.

On August 26, 1848, Reverend George Easterly called a meeting to form a new Synod, which was originally named the "Re-Organized Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod," suggesting that the Tennessee Synod had become "disorganized." It adopted the Constitution of the parent synod verbatim, and its first meeting was held on October 21 of that year.⁵³

At the "Re-Organized" meeting of October 6-10, 1849, the title was reversed to "Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized." This meeting occurred at Buffalo Creek Meeting House, Carter County, Tennessee, with William S. Deal representing St. John's. There were stern area petitions from St. John's, Warlick's School-House, St. Paul's, Hass's, Miller's, and one from a Gaston County Church. From these petitions, after a committee review, a portion of that from St. John's was paraphrased into the minutes, and is presented herein, as it is typical of the charges and tenor of language leveled against the Tennessee Synod by the "Re-Organized" Synod:

No. 2, Is a petition from St. John's Church, Catawba county, N. C., stating that they had convened for the purpose of agreeing upon the best method of doing something for the bleeding Church of Christ, in their then existing, divided and deranged state. They state that they had met in convention on the 23d of August, for the purpose of considering the expediency of attaching themselves to the Synod in its reorganized state. The question was decided in the affirmative without a dissenting voice; and therefore their petition was brought in to existence for the wise consideration of Synod.

They further urge that they have done their best endeavours [sic] to effect peace, and to continue Christian fellowship with the Tennessee Synod, that could be done on Christian terms, but that all had proved abortive. That the Synod had (by a majority of votes) disannulled that which had been decided by God's word; and that by this unreasonable conduct, they had placed the Synod above God and his holy word. And that in their judgement, such conduct seemed much like "the man of sin, placing himself in the temple of God, showing himself to be God."

They express it as their real condition, that they were either compelled to connive at the Synod's illegal proceedings contrary to the conviction of their own consciences, or to stand alone in the enjoyment of their liberties as free men and Christians; or unite themselves to the Synod in its reorganized state.—They add: "God help us, we cannot violate our consciences, especially when directed by the plain word of God." They say "to stand alone upon principles is safe but lonesome." They therefore ask for the strengthening of their cause; that they be received into connection with this Body.

The petitioners express their fears of clerical power and influence, but from the effort made by this Body, to re-establish the well grounded principles of the Church; they should place the most implicit confidence in the effort made by the body to sustain the truth. That they did believe that all would be done that the Synod could do to support, (not only the true doctrine,) but also Church Discipline.

They state that they had laid before the Tennessee Synod (in 1847) in the order of petition, a few statements of facts, asking the Synod to leave them in the full enjoyment, or possession of their Church rights and liberties, and to suffer the whole matter to be decided by the Constitution and the principles of the Church of God.

The petitioners state that the Synod had refused to do so, saying that their plea for a redress of grievances, "required no action from Synod;" and thus had denied them as a Church, the right of petition; and their vote (of 1847) had established the Church of Christ. They refer this Body to their petition of 1847.

The petitioners then proceed as free men, to enumerate some of the violations of the Constitution as committed by the Tennessee Synod, as follows:

- 1st, The act of receiving (into the Synod) the case of Mr. Miller, which had been decided according to the word of God.
- 2nd, The Synod's resolve in that case.
- 3rd, The act of sending Rev. Goodman and Killian, to execute the rule (i. e. the resolve of Synod) and regulate the Congregations.
- 4th, In that the Synod had, both in 1846 and 7, either decided, dismissed, or trampled under foot, (by a majority of votes) that which they were bound to decide alone by the word of God, say they, the above with many others, are unconstitutional acts of the Synod.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *The Defence*, p. 20.

And they allege that they are safe in saying that the Synod has not quoted one text of Scripture in support of their proceedings; neither had they produced one clause of the Constitution to justify their conduct. The petitioners assign the above as their reasons for not fellowshiping them as a Christian Synod.

They further ask for themselves and Pastor, Rev. A. Miller, to be admitted into membership with this Synod. They state that Mr. Miller has preached for them a number of years, and that they see no change in his principles. They require this Body to favor them with the next session of the Synod in their Church.

Signed by 28 members. [unlisted]⁵⁴

As a note for accuracy, when this group from St. John's presented their petition to the Tennessee Synod in 1847, the Tennessee Synod did not recognize them as a member of that Synod due to the departure of Miller and Ephraim Shell in 1846, and the Tennessee Synod did not feel obliged to specifically address it, nor many other petitions of the same or similar nature.

Other area Lutheran congregations were similarly divided. The St. Paul's petition stated "that they had for some time stood detached from all Synods." Hass's petitioned to join the new Synod, apparently in its entirety. Miller's, "divided as they are," in a similarly long and eloquent dissertation as that from St. John's, joined the new Synod. All letters were published, with liberal footnotes from Miller. Also included in the minutes were seven points of contention where the parent "disorganized" Tennessee Synod was accused of specific constitutional violations. Rev. George Easterly's strong letter to the 1847 session of Tennessee Synod, which had been largely ignored in the proceedings, was also appended.⁵⁵ The pamphlet war had now begun in earnest, and Synodical Minutes became the primary ammunition.

By the Tennessee Synod meeting, which commenced ten days later with St. John's member Cicero Henkel in attendance, word of the transactions of the Re-Organized Synod reached the floor of the assembly.

Whereas the Rev. George Easterly has withdrawn himself from this body since the last session of our Synod, by forming a body in Tennessee, which styles itself "The Reorganized Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod"; and whereas the said body, in its proceedings, has charged our Synod with violating its constitution, according to "their opinion"; be it therefore

Resolved 1. That the name of the Rev. G. Easterly be no longer retained in our clerical catalogue; and

2. That so soon as the said body shall have clearly pointed out in what respect our Synod has violated its constitution, we shall proceed to meet the charge.⁵⁶

The gauntlet contained in resolution number two was picked up promptly, when the Re-Organized Minutes appeared in the hands of area congregations in early 1850. In preparation for the 1850 Tennessee Synod meeting, an "Associate Council" was set up among its congregations in Catawba, Lincoln, and Gaston Counties to re-evaluate the "Miller case," as it was named, and answer the charges. They held their third meeting on August 2, and reported the following to the Tennessee Synod:

... they state that every honorable effort was made to acquit the Rev. A. Miller of the charge of adultery preferred against him, but that all resulted in an entire failure, and did not render his innocence even probable. . . . They also recommend Synod to reply to the charges made by the said "Reorganized Evangelical Tennessee Synod" against us.⁵⁷

A complete division among the St. John's Lutherans was painfully manifest at the 1850 meeting of the Tennessee Synod, held on September 14.

54. *Report of the Transactions of the Second Session of the Re-Organized Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, 1849*, (Greenville, TN, 1850), pp. 11-13. All emphasis is added by the author.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-16.

56. Henkel, p. 121. *TN Synod Minutes-1849*, p. 2-5. St. Paul's-Gaston was accepted as a new member, which might be related to the difficulties.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

On petition, St. Paul's Church, Catawba County, North Carolina, which had been withdrawn from Synod, contrary to its will, by its delegate, at the time Rev. Adam Miller, in October 1846, withdrew from Synod, was received back into Synod again. St. John's Church, in the same county, which had been withdrawn from Synod, in a similar manner, at the same time, was also received back into Synod.⁵⁸

The confused Synod affiliation during this period stands as follows:

October 17, 1846 — St. John's (with Miller's and Ephraim Shell's exits from the Synod meeting) was considered to have withdrawn from the Tennessee Synod, and therefore, was without Synod affiliation;
October, 1847 — The P. C. Henkel congregation was considered as a member of the Tennessee Synod;
October, 6, 1849 — Miller and his congregation of St. John's joined the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized;
September 14, 1850 — Henkel's congregation was affirmed as being a member of the original Tennessee Synod.

Not only were the St. John's Lutheran congregations simultaneous members of two competing Synods, **they were active and highly visible entities in both!!!**

In response to a St. John's petition, the Tennessee Synod published, attached to their minutes of 1850, a reply to the charges of unconstitutionality. It was named *Proceedings of the Evang. Lutheran Tennessee Synod, in the case of The Rev. Adam Miller, Vindicated*. In an appendix, there was a letter signed by twelve Elders who had been present at the 1845 Miller hearing at Trinity Church. They attested that "there was but a part of the evidence against Mr. Miller before the meeting; and as we were called upon without having time for reflection, we decided the case differently to what we would have done, provided we had had the testimony before us which was given the judicial investigation." This letter was signed by Frederic [sic] Smith and Eli Sigman, from St. John's.⁵⁹

Curiously, the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized, met at the "commodious log building" of St. John's Church, Catawba County, at their third conference, less than one month later, on October 12, 1850. St. John's has been described as "one of Miller's congregations," which is only partially accurate. Synod convened on Saturday with sermons by D. Forrester and Adam Miller. On Sunday, services were held once more, with Forrester and Miller officiating. Communion services which followed included 97 worshippers.⁶⁰

On Monday, the business sessions began, with St. John's delegate, William S. Deal, elected Secretary. Other area Lutherans were represented by William Turner from Miller's, John Propst from St. Paul's, John Hass from Hass's Church, and John Shuford from Warlick's School-House.⁶¹

After routine business, William Deal was appointed to the committee to review various petitions from the Churches of the new Synod. Included in this group was a letter from Rev. J. R. Moser, son of Daniel Moser, attempting reconciliation. Moser was born in the area now known as Catawba County, and might have been the perfect mediator in the ever-heating dispute.

Whereas, the Rev. J. R. Moser, a member of the Tennessee Synod had expressed the sentiment, to several of the members of this body that he regretted the unpleasant state of things which exist between us and them," desiring conditions of peace. This subject having been brought before the Synod by a member of the same: upon which, Mr. Moser being requested, repeated his views before the Synod. A protracted discussion ensued, after which it was resolved that Mr. Moser furnish the Synod with his own views on this subject to be inserted in these minutes, as follows:—He said, "that he did not believe that either party could gain anything by continuing the present controversy, but that, in his opinion, it would rather aggravate the matter. He believed, on the other hand, that it would be calculated to do much good, if each party would agree to drop the subject, and say no more about it, each party permitting the other to enjoy their own views with regard to the propriety or constitutionality of previous proceedings. He believed that this course would be calculated to allay

58. *Ibid.*, p. 122.

59. *Vindicated*, p. 33.

60. *Report of the Transactions of the Third Session of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized*, 1850, (Greeneville, TN: 1851), pp. 3-4. While it is impossible to determine what proportion of the congregation followed Adam Miller, the number of communicants suggests about 40% or less.

61. *Ibid.*

the bitterness, and to produce true love and friendship, at least to some extent between the parties. He further said, that he confidently believed that his brethren of the Tennessee Synod, were disposed to act in accordance with these views.⁶²

Moser's request was denied, until the Tennessee Synod rescind its "illegal proceedings, and agree to conform to the principles of the Lutheran Church."⁶³

At this meeting, William S. Deal and G. P. Sigman of St. John's presented a letter describing P. C. Henkel's reading of the 1849 Re-Organized minutes in an unfavorable and biased manner. This and a similar letter from Miller's Church (Springs Road) were included in the Minutes. The St. John's letter begins thus:

We the undersigned, deem it a duty which we owe to the cause of justice and truth to submit, to your venerable body a concurrent testimony on the subject of reading the minutes in our (St. John's) Church.⁶⁴

These two letters were anonymously footnoted with strong language, such as:

Mr. H. seems to be skilled in the art of spiritualizing. . . . In our humble view such a course of conduct is beneath the dignity of a gentleman, much less a christian. Can a man be a safe teacher who would thus willfully misconstrue the word of God to suit his cruel ambition—to destroy one who he confesses preaches the same doctrine which he himself professes to teach and believe. If this is not sinning against the Holy Ghost, I am mistaken.⁶⁵

Predictably, Henkel responded to the charges, but his publication did not appear prior to the Re-Organized meeting of 1851, where William S. Deal and John Sipe represented St. John's, and presented a petition with the following dichotomy:

They exhort the Synod to make an honorable peace with the (so-called) Tenn. Synod. But if this cannot be done, that we pry into the merits (if any), of their vindication and reply to it in full.⁶⁶

The Adam Miller supporters at St. John's stated that they were pleased with his service, and offered the name of William S. Deal, "a man of suitable qualifications to bear the office of Deacon, and request that he be ordained to that office."⁶⁷ The petition was signed by eighteen persons.

In late 1851 or early 1852, P. C. Henkel's publication, entitled *P. C. Henkel Vindicates Himself against the Foul Calumnies and Misrepresentations of the So Called "Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod Re-Organized," as Contained in the Minutes of Its Session, etc.*, appeared. Henkel countered the attacks in much the same way his father did thirty years prior -- directly and forcefully.

It is a fact well known to thousands, that some time in the spring of 1845, the REV. ADAM MILLER, (formerly a member of the Ev. Luth. Tenn Synod,) was accused of being the father of a bastard child. And, whereas the said Miller is not content with having ruined his own character, and bringing reproach upon his family; but is making every effort in his power, unjustly to tarnish the character of our Synod, and particularly to destroy my reputation as a minister: I deem it not only a privilege, but an imperative duty I owe to myself, to lift my feeble pen in my own defence; since recently the most nefarious attempts have been made to destroy my reputation.

I humbly pray that my enemies and bitter persecutors, may speedily repent, ere it be too late. And that those who may have been kept in the dark by designing, wicked men, may come to a knowledge of the truth, and embrace it, is the prayer of the reader's humble servant.⁶⁸

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

64. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

65. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14. The footnotes obviously were the words of Adam Miller.

66. *The Defence*, pp. 3, 12.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

68. P. C. Henkel, *P. C. Henkel Vindicates Himself against the Foul Calumnies and Misrepresentations of the So Called "Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod Re-Organized as Contained in the Minutes of its Session Held in St. John's Church, Catawba County, N. C., From the 12th to the 17th of October, 1850*, hereinafter referenced *P. C. Henkel Vindicates*, (Salem, N. C., 1851), p. 2.

Henkel answered insults that he had been compared to "Jack-asses," and "Bull-dogs." He defended himself against some of Miller's charges, and leveled counter-charges against Miller and the Re-Organized Minutes without hesitation. He concluded his introduction with:

Now Mr. M., is your conduct Christian? Is it moral? Or is it human, to compare a man to brutes? Indeed, this shows, that if you were in possession of facts against any of us, as exist against your character, we would not be allowed to say one word about you, but what you would make heaven and earth awfully to fulminate. Your conduct and conversation is very chaste indeed!!! No wonder that some of your followers can have the impudence to style me a "muly-bull." Oh! shame!! It becomes you indeed, to tell the public, "that it is a Miller and not a Henkel which has become a subject of persecution!!!" Dear reader, judge for yourself.69

The divided congregations at both Miller's and St. John's found themselves in a very disconsolate situation. Rather than sit down with the two Pastors and negotiate an amicable arrangement whereby all could worship in their own time and with their own Pastor, the two congregations at each Church elected to compete. And the laundry was hung out to dry in the form of letters included in publications promoted by the two Pastors. The Re-Organized Synod had published lengthy letters from Miller's and St. John's in its 1850 minutes. Henkel responded by including similarly combative letters from his followers in the same churches:

We, the members of St. John's Church, . . . having seen the petition from Miller's Church, . . . and signed by several refractory characters, and having also seen a piece, styled a "concurrent testimony" to the petition from Miller's church, . . . which is a downright perversion of facts. Now, inasmuch as the so called "concurrent testimony," in part of its misrepresentations, corresponds with the wicked and corrupt statements in the petition from Miller's church; and as our brethren at that church, who have a deep regard for truth and good morals, have corrected that little refractory club, it will be unnecessary for us to notice those particulars, wherein the two instruments are of the same import entirely, as we would be constrained, when regarding truth, to identify what our brethren have said in answer to the petitioners. As to the concurrent testimony, it bears the date Oct. 14th, 1850, which was Monday during their pretended session of Synod, that this foul testimony was bolstered up, affording ample opportunity to concur, and by the aid of additional council, more grossly to misrepresent.70

The following is a sampling of the bitter in-fighting, as presented in "point/counter-point" from the lengthy letters from the two St. John's Lutheran congregations. A portion of the letter from Miller's Lutheran Church was referenced by St. John's, and is included for clarity of opinion as if submitted by St. John's. A few pertinent footnotes, written presumably by Adam Miller, are also included.

TSR Minutes: Rev. P. C. Henkel, took up the minutes and proposed reading them first as they were written; secondly, as they meant or should read.

PCH Vindicates: Petitioners! this statement is notoriously incorrect; . . . The truth is, he stated to the congregation, that the minutes very frequently expressed themselves in such a manner, that he did not think, they intended to say; . . . He said he would read them as they ought to read, so as to be against our Synod,—that he would set them with all their horns against us: and then he would answer them to the satisfaction of every unprejudiced mind; which we think he did.

TSR Minutes: He commenced with the title page, and said that the Re-organized Synod was not the original Tennessee Synod, because there was but one ordained minister in the body and therefore could not organize a Constitutional Synod.

PCH Vindicates: The truth is, Henkel stated, that according to the language of the minutes quoted from Rev. D. Henkel (page 18) their Synod is no Synod.

TSR Minutes: He spent some time in laboring to prove that Mr. Miller in his remarks on page 5, minute of 1849, called the word of God a symbol.

PCH Vindicates: To this we answer, that Mr. Henkel did not only labor to prove, but did clearly show, in few words from the reading of the minutes on the above cited page, that it is the case.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

70. P. C. Henkel *Vindicates*, pp. 8-9.

- TSR Minutes: Mr. H. then proceeded to page 8, and read as follows . . . On this Mr. H. remarked "that the language employed conveyed the following idea,—that it is just what the devil wanted, to get the devil to quit preaching, and those who were opposing the devil had a zeal for God but not according to knowledge."
- PCH Vindicates: As to the remarks Henkel made on the quotation from the minutes, we do not recollect so distinctly, and therefore cannot affirm so positively. But this we do recollect, that he said he did not suppose that the sentence . . . reads as it was desired. And in our judgment it does not. We will however let those who are better acquainted with the construction of sentences, &c., judge.
- TSR Footnote: Reader, consider that this divine was under the consecrated roof of the house of God acting officially; and there could utter such a glaring falsehood. Can it be possible that the most superficial mind could not detect such ambitious perversion of truth, unless blinded by the demon prejudice. The language conveys no such idea, and Mr. H. knew that it was a falsehood when he made the expression. Can such conduct proceed from a christian?
- TSR Minutes: Mr. H. then proceeded to page 12 and read as follows:—"There were names to that petition of old gray-headed fathers, who contended **with** the enemy in a previous struggle." Remarkd, "that to contend **with** the enemy is to be on the enemy's side, co-operating **with** the enemy."
- TSR Minutes: On page 13 he read:—"When the Synod to avoid complying with their own condition voted that 127 was not an honorable majority over 24." On this he replied "that it is a corrupt falsehood; that there was no such vote taken in Synod."
- PCH Vindicates: Mr. H. did deny that the Synod voted that 24 was a majority over 127. Those who wish to know how the vote was taken, are referred to the minutes of that session. Who could believe that any set of sensible men would vote that 24 is a majority over 127.
- TSR Minutes: Again, on page 19 he read:—"The Church decisions were considered final." On this Mr. H. remarked, "that according to the reading, there was a time when Church decisions were final; but at the present they were not so. Also on the quotation from Math. 18: 'What they bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.' Here said Mr. H., is a perversion of the text; and then quoted the literal reading thus:—"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven."
- PCH Vindicates: Well, Messrs. Deal and Sigman! What do you want with this? Can you prove to the reverse? You cannot, unless you do it from the 35th chapter of Matthew!!!
- TSR Minutes: The question being proposed to Mr. H., whether the Synod had not received appeals in the Miller case. He positively denied that there had been appeals received.
- PCH Vindicates: We answer, relative to the question concerning of an appeal, that Henkel answered, to my knowledge, there was not.
- TSR Minutes: And on the same occasion, being asked whether the Synod had not acted upon the case? He evaded the answer. He denied in part the right of petition by free men.
- TSR Footnote: With what face of authority can a member of the Tennessee Synod deny the right of petition of free men? Such an attempt in the infancy of the Synod would have been exploded. . . . but what did the petitioners of 1847 ask for? why it was for the Synod to decide the existing difficulty by the word of God, &c., which they utterly refused to do, and evaded the demand by a majority of votes.
- PCH Vindicates: We answer, that Wm. S. Deal is the man who proposed the question, and he was very angry from every appearance, as every person could hear from his snappish declarations, that even could not see his countenance. And Henkel did evade saying any more to him, that prudence required, to stop a discussion with a man, in a rage of fury. The manner in which Mr. H. treated him, commends itself to every prudent man. . . . Did he not tell you very correctly, under what circumstances Synod would be under obligations to grant the petitions of freemen? To illustrate the subject . . . Suppose the congregation would petition to the next Synod, informing her, that the congregation is determined to act like a set of freemen; telling Synod, we have called our minister to preach for us, and Synod (our servant) must concur with us in what we have done; otherwise she will act unconstitutional. . . . Do you suppose Synod would be bound to grant their request, under such circumstances. And said, I know your good sense and deep regard for christianity would answer: No it would not. . . . If adulterers, whoremongers, Roman Catholics and what not, petition your Synod, you grant all their requests, regardless of circumstances, lest you "deny, in part, the right of petition of freemen."
- TSR Minutes: He also said that there were signers to the petitions from N. C., in 1847 which did not understand the design of them when they signed them; but referred to no particular one.

PCH Vindicates: To this we answer: . . . Mr. H. never intended to point out any particular one, but confined himself to the language of the minutes, which clearly shows that it was some of the three or four hundred.

TSR Minutes: Mr. H., at the same time, being requested to read the Rev. G. Easterly's letter appended to the minutes, which was indefinitely postponed; but he remarked that the texts quoted by Mr. Easterly in his letter stood as proof to the reader. But said he, if I read that letter I will prove quite different from those texts, to what Mr. Easterly has intended to prove from them.

TSR Footnotes: Rev. Easterly has indeed proven from the plain word of God the positions which he undertook to prove. How Mr. H. can prove quite different from those texts is to us a mystery, unless he has learned the art of explaining a book that says one thing and means another.

PCH Vindicates: . . . do you wish to make an impression on the reader's mind that Henkel manifested a reluctance to read the letter? If so, you tell an untruth. Did not Henkel state, after he was through with the body of the minutes, that he would now read the letter also, if the congregation desired it? Did not the congregation conclude that it would be too late in the evening to have the letter read also, and to refer to Mr. E's. quotations, which Henkel said he would do, provided the congregation said he should read it. Did not Mr. H. say, if you wish me to read it, I will do so, if it even takes me till 9 or 10 o'clock in the night? Was it not then put to vote, whether or not it should be read that evening? You know it was. And consequently deferred to some other time by the vote of the congregation. And yet you can say, "it was indefinitely postponed." This can only be true, in one sense, that is: there was no particular time set, when the letter was to be read. . . . You no doubt saw that if you would give a fair statement, it could be no advantage to your ungodly cause, and, of course, could not injure Mr. H. Hence you keep as dark as possible, (just like your leader,) so that when closely pursued, you are ready with a slip-gap, so that you can dodge in another direction.⁷¹

The St. John's letter supporting Henkel was signed by Eli E. Deal, Frederick Smith, Eli Sigman, Tobias Moser, B. C. Allen, Moses Herman, George H. Sigman, Joel Simmon, H. Ingold, and David Smith. A further attestation was made that William S. Deal was present when Henkel read the minutes, and that he stated that they were read correctly. This was signed by several of the same persons, plus F. R. Shook.⁷²

Henkel concluded his pamphlet with several pages in his own defense, and in a counter-attack against Adam Miller:

Now if the Rev. A. M. is innocent, why did the Rev. E. (Easterly) introduce this in his defence? May we not conjecture that the Rev. A. M. acknowledged his guilt to the Rev. E.? If so, and with true repentance, the Rev. E., as a christian, was bound to forgive him according to Matt. 18, &c. Likewise are we willing to forgive him, so soon as he will confess, and promise to do no more. . . . Now if he is not guilty, he can neither be condemned nor acquitted; and if he has committed no trespass, and is overtaken in no fault, he can neither be restored nor forgiven; for how to forgive an innocent man, I do not understand.⁷³

The letters from St. John's and Miller's differ on nearly every detail, most of which appear either trivial, misrepresented, or grossly exaggerated. The above has been presented at some length, to allow the current reader to formulate his own opinion.

In 1852, the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized and Adam Miller followed suit and published, again upon request of St. John's, a thesis entitled *The Defence*, and attached it to the 1851 minutes.⁷⁴ This dissertation was over one hundred pages in length, and was in answer to the Tennessee Synod's *Vindicated* discourse. In *The Defence*, Miller recounted the entire history of the controversy, beginning with the Catharine Anthony episode. Tragically, Miller's family met with much death while he was working on the publication in late 1851. After the loss of his wife and two daughters, he was left with one son and one fourteen month old grandson.⁷⁵

71. *Tennessee Synod Re-Organized Minutes, 1850*, pp. 12-18. *P. C. Henkel Vindicates*, pp. 4-13. P. C. Henkel was not present at the 1847 TN

Synod meeting, and resisted answering direct questions other than from the Synod Minutes. The Gospel of Matthew does not have 35 Chapters.

Every word in the quotes above were written by the divided congregations at Miller's and St. John's, or their Lutheran pastors.

72. *P. C. Henkel Vindicates*, pp. 2-13.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

74. *The Defence*, pp. 15-125.

75. *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 121-122.

However, the work was completed in 1852, approved in essence by the committee, and was published. Excerpts from the pen of Adam Miller:

... several of those very young men, who persecute me with so much severity and bitterness, once boasted of the honor of having been instructed and confirmed to the Church by me; as well as my fatherly guidance in their first lessons of divinity, by which they were introduced into the sacred **pulpit**. But pride, that demon of unrighteousness, not willing to let them submit to the cross of Christ, and that of their brother, has induced them to take up the weapons of persecution against me. Doubtless loaves and fishes had their due weight in this matter. . . . Now men may speak against the cruelties of **purgatory**, or the **Inquisition**; but what are either of these when compared with such indescribable miseries as they were inflicting on myself and my family. . . . I have frequently thought, that if D. Henkel could at this time know what was carrying on in that Synod, that his **bones would shake in his grave**. . . . How much more publicity could the Tennessee Synod, have given to my misfortunes than they have done. Why they have been spread where ever their minutes have been circulated. . . . I hope by the grace of God to be able at all times to repent of, confess and forsake them [sins], and so find mercy. And that from a very different being to that of any member of the Tennessee Synod. . . . But will my brethren remember, that it is not my personal sins, nor that of any other mans, that they are now called on to sanction, but the most palpable violations of their sacred principles, upon which our eternal well-being depends.⁷⁶

"In compliance with the request of the petitioners from St. John's Church, Catawba County, N. C.," Miller published a list of additional violations of scriptures and the constitution, which were often variations of the arguments presented previously.⁷⁷

And thus the plethora of pamphlets slowed down, but the debate continued for many years.

The fifth session of the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized was held in 1852, with F. A. Hoke as delegate from St. John's. Other local churches in attendance were Warlick's School-House and Rhyne's of Gaston. William S. Deal was present as an applicant, with Andrew Rader and George L. Hunt. At this meeting, *The Defence* was read in its entirety, and its contents were "unanimously approved in substance." Many churches submitted petitions, and most were in favor of the actions of the new Synod, but the petition from St. Paul's cautioned Synod "to be careful what they publish," though they did not disapprove of *The Defence*.⁷⁸

However, the P. C. Henkel publication was on the minds of a few congregations. Rhyne's Church in Gaston County felt that it would be improper to reply, as Henkel "himself has said that a wise man would say it is not worthy of notice," and "we will not 'contend with' him lest he might think we are on his side." Warlick's suggested that the pamphlet be answered, "not that it really deserves one, but because it might be pleaded that it is unanswerable." The St. John's opinion of Henkel's effort was that it was "unnecessary [sic] to notice it, believing that it is formed upon nothing but the corruption of ambitious men, and by no means consistent with the principles of christianity." The Synod action was as follows:

Whereas, it is further requested by petitioners for Synod to consider the propriety of replying to P. C. Henkel's [sic] "self indication," we (the body) hereby declare that it is considered by us as being beneath the frowns of contempt. Whereupon it was . . . **Resolved**, That we are of the opinion that it would be an abuse of the time afforded us, were we, as a christian body, to consume it in replying to his or any such unchristian production.⁷⁹

The next meeting was set for Rhyne's Church in Gaston County, North Carolina. It was resolved that "the wayward and wavering be convinced of the error of their ways, 'and let them return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon them, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon them.' May the chain of friendship again be brightened between those who were formerly so much delighted to meet each other in the Lords house; and may

76. *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18, 20, 53, 88, 111-112.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

78. *Report of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod Re-Organized, During Its Fifth Session Held in New Hope Church, Sullivan County, East Tennessee, from Monday the 27th, to Thursday the 30th Day of September, 1852*, ("Spy Office", Greeneville, TN, 1852), pp. 2, 4, 5. Copy was obtained from Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia.

79. *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

peace again smile upon Gods bleeding Zion. . . ." The last comments were written by Secretary George L. Hunt, and attached to the minutes.⁸⁰

Two years passed when there is lack of available information about the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized transactions.⁸¹ But as Adam Miller found himself unmarried due to the unfortunate deaths in his family, the vicious local gossip would not subside:

Miller . . . is riding about in his buggy and staying where he can, first one place and then another and is halling [sic] every woman and girl with him that he can get in his buggy but you know that they are such as will suit him. He is preaching but little for that is not the most of his business but to go some place that he can get some one to ride with him. He is about done in our country with all respectable people.⁸²

The Re-Organized Meeting of 1854 was held in St. James' Church, Greene County, Tennessee, with Adam Miller being the only pastor present. The same Joseph E. Bell, who was ordained under Oak Trees with David Henkel at Buffalo Creek Church in 1819, and who had returned to his Presbyterian faith soon thereafter, was accepted as a member of the congregation. As a part of the proceedings:

Rev. Joseph E. Bell, who was formerly a member of the old Evangelical Lutheran Synod of N. C., presented himself before this body with his credential authority, and very feelingly requested membership with this body, declaring that he would teach nothing but the Lutheran Doctrine in its purity as is contained in the Symbols of our Church, and the Holy Scriptures; also, adhere to the Constitutions of our Synod, it was therefore, . . . **Resolved**, That he be cordially received a member of our Synod, and have a seat with us in the succeeding transactions of this Session.⁸³

Other than Adam Miller, no representative from North Carolina was present at this meeting. But the acquisition of Bell into the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized must have sent shock-waves into the parent synod, as Bell was integrally involved in the ordination debates surrounding David Henkel, and knew each and every point of contention in the foundations of the Tennessee Synod thirty-four years previous. Bell and Miller were appointed as the two Pastors to examine applicant Andrew Rader.⁸⁴

The Tennessee Synod Re-Organized utilized this meeting to once more go on the offensive. They wrote that David Henkel's friends "covered him with the mantle of charity," and "on the side of mercy." Yet, under similar circumstances in 1845, the Tennessee Synod "did most wickedly violate her Constitution." Thirty-seven charges "of the grossest kind" were repeated, "and as we believe some of them of a soul damning [sic] nature:"

All this is by them passed over in silence. Whether they cannot answer and are too proud to own their errors, is for them to decide. They claim to be the original Tennessee Synod;—The Rev. D. Henkel, certainly understood the principles of that Body, as he was their principle writer, and as they seem to object to our productions, we shall favor them with his, as follows:⁸⁵

Attached to the Minutes was a dissertation, originally written by David Henkel, challenging the North Carolina Synod to the aborted debates of 1827.⁸⁶ Appended to Henkel's language are Secretary Andrew Rader's strong comments:

80. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

81. The Minutes from these years have not been located in over seven Lutheran libraries.

82. Becca Henkel (wife of P. C. Henkel) to Socrates Henkel, August 25, 1854, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. There is no other suggestion that Miller curtailed his ministry during this period, and many "respectable" people at St. John's and elsewhere continued to support Miller.

83. *Report of the Transactions of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized, During Its 7th Session, Held in St. James' Church, Greene County, Tenn., From Monday the 18th, to Wednesday the 20th of September, 1854*, (Lyon & Co.'s Job Office, Greeneville, TN: 1855), pp. 3, 5.

84. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

85. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

86. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-32.

It matters not whether it be David Henkel or Adam Miller who is to be disciplined; justice should be done.

Neither was [sic] such men then *given to the Devil*.--We have (as we think) good reasons to believe that with some of them, necessity was made a law to drive them to sound principle, and not a Christian, for Christ's sake; and to act virtuous for virtue's sake. The Tennessee Synod commenced in dirt (we mean difficulties) and it was then said to be for good as it was calculated to preserve the doctrines pure.--Would not like causes produce like effects, now, as well as then?

It was then contended that a member of the Church was not obnoxious to the sentence of excommunication, from the circumstance of being a sinner; but for unbelief, in denying Christ as revealed in the gospel. Personal conduct could only be adduced in evidence of unbelief. . . . To deny the word is to deny Christ, and to deny a true minister is to deny God upon his throne. Their silence is a tacit denial. . . . Doctrine and discipline, could only be decided by the word of God, in a congregational capacity without Synodical interference. On these grounds the members of Synod stood solemnly united to each other.

When their opponents refused to accede to these proposals, they were denounced as dishonorable strife-makers, cowards, heirlings [sic., "hirelings"], false teachers, wolves in sheeps [sic] clothing, as being unsafe ministers and conscious of being in error, as having no evidence to support their doctrines, and what is infinitely worse, they were charged with being too proud to humble themselves to God and his truth.

. . . that the poisonous wild gourds of mens traditions might not be mingled with this salutary food of the word of God.

We have, as we think, just reasons to believe; judging from causes to effects, that they have been actuated by pride, self-righteousness, and mercenary motives, and fear that any thing which malice, ambition or revenge could do, to support their proceedings would not be wanting on their part; for they have never made the first proposal to us for peace, but such as was equal to blood-red moral murder.

They are bound by the most solemn test to decide nothing relative to doctrine of church discipline, by any other rule than the word of God; and in open defiance of this test, they have decided matters of the weightiest importance by a majority of votes and by that arbitrary, yea, lawless majority have sustained themselves, and have declined any further investigation upon the subject, . . . When a set of men have no evidence to support a rotten cause, they resort to such schemes. Is it not strange . . . to think that the Tennessee Synod which could once boast of the purity of her principles and promptitude in defending them; . . . should now decline writing and adopt the generalists arguments to justify their conduct.

He [David Henkel] wrote these things for the due observance of his children when he should have been dead and gone. We ask, will they dishonor his good intentions, and the sacred truths he wrote by bidding defiance to conviction? If the cause now pursued by that body [Tennessee Synod] (including his relatives) be correct, we can only say that it proves beyond the shadow of a doubt, that all that was intended by them in the former arena, was to drag him out of personal difficulties to sustain his private character, and that he might procure bread for his family; it could not have been principle, but mercenary purposes and ends which they had in view.⁸⁷

Identical to David Henkel over thirty years before, if the Tennessee Synod would respond in writing, pointing out their own errors, the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized would forgive. If errors were that of the new Synod, "they shall be corrected." Silence on the part of the Tennessee Synod was viewed with contempt.

We can see no use in pursuing them any further, they certainly are condemned of themselves. But will they not for shame sake desist from circulating the infamous, wilful [sic], corrupt falsehood that we have withdrawn from the Church. It is true we have withdrawn ourselves from your lawless proceeding.--We left the Synod for the same reasons that Luther did the Church of Rome; and as the Tennessee Synod essayed to do from the generalists and N. C. Synod because of a departure from the faith.

What is this but artfully shrouding with the mantle of darkness their wicked proceeding, and thus have used their whole influence to prevent the light of God's word from shining upon their ungodly conduct before their congregations. But on the contrary a true minister conscious of having done right, would have spread his proceedings before them and invited them to compare his conduct with the word of God, that error should be done away. . . . May the love of God constrain us to do right. Amen.⁸⁸

At the 1858 meeting of the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized, Joseph E. Bell presented a sermon, but little other business was transacted.⁸⁹ St. John's hosted the tenth session of the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized on October 24-26, 1859, and the dismay with the perpetual synodical bickering was stated in plain English via a St. John's petition:

87. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-38. David Henkel's positions on public debate can be found in a previous chapter.

88. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

89. *Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Reorganized, 1858*, (No publisher listed, 1858), p. 1.

... that they have Rev. A. Miller for their regular pastor, and are satisfied with him. They also desire visits from other ministers of this body. They say they are willing to support synods when conducted in a Christian manner, otherwise they are done with them.⁹⁰

They also reported that Rev. George L. Hunt had visited their congregation.⁹¹

In 1866, Adam Miller resigned from his office for health reasons. St. John's looked toward Reverend George Luther Hunt, who had visited the congregation occasionally in the past. Hunt was born in Tennessee, and moved to Lincoln County, North Carolina in 1852 for ministerial study under Adam Miller. He traveled to his various charges on a little black mule named "Coaly," which became well-known to Hunt's parishioners. In 1868, Hunt relocated to Catawba County, and took up residence near Old St. Paul's.⁹²

On February 13, 1868, at nearly sixty-seven years of age, Adam Miller was relieved of the trials and tribulations of this earth. Two days later, he was buried beside his wife and children at St. Paul's cemetery. An obituary in his behalf contains the following memorial:

**A safe and able divine; a staunch and constant friend of
civil and religious liberty; and an uncom-
promising opponent to innovation
in doctrine or discipline**

A Pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, 42 years. 93

When the next session of the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized met in 1871, Daniel Heffner was the delegate from St. John's, and the passing of Adam Miller was respectfully recognized. The assembly continued the sharp verbal assaults against the Tennessee Synod, by criticizing its new constitution, particularly with regard to "missionary schemes" and receiving of appeals from congregations:

Resolved. That we can never associate with them under their new Constitution, for by so doing we would be partakers of their evil deeds, and the true principles of the church would be forever lost to our posterity.⁹⁴

Reverend G. L. Hunt proved that he was ready, willing, and able to put his pen to paper in much the same style as his predecessor. Attached to the minutes was his thesis, endorsed by a committee and euphemistically entitled *Address on the State of the Church*.

We shall therefore direct this little treatise to the very small remnant that is left of you (Isa. 1:9,) who still worship the God of your fathers as you have been taught by them. We will do this from the fact that we would consider it an abuse of our time and talents to address ourselves to those who are acting as ringleaders among the votaries of the new measure system. We might as well try to convert the Pope or the Devil himself, (both of whom can quote and pervert Scripture to serve their own interests,) as to try to convince men who have been changing from bad to worse for the last twenty-five years, and who are now imposing themselves upon many who call themselves Lutherans, under the revered name of Martin Luther. They have been sufficiently addressed by an abler hand than ours, the result proves it is useless to write more to them. It would be like casting pearls before swine, for those Philistines will not understand us.⁹⁵

The thesis of twelve closely printed pages was in opposition to several provisions and principles of the new Constitution of the Tennessee Synod.

90. *Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized, During its Tenth Session, Held in St. John's Church, Catawba County, N. C., From Monday, 24th, to Wednesday, 26th of October, 1859, (Greeneville, TN, 1859), p. 3.*

91. *Ibid.*

92. Gladys Barger, *Fortieth Anniversary, 1901-1941, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hickory, North Carolina*, p. 14.

93. *Minutes of the Evan. Lutheran Tenn. Synod Reorganized During its Eleventh Session, with an Address on the State of the Church by G. L. Hunt, Pastor of the E. L. Church, 1871, (Carolina Eagle Office, Hickory Tavern: 1972), pp. 7-8.*

94. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.

95. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-12

In 1872, St. John's sent delegate G. A. Brady to the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized 12th session at St. Paul's, with a petition paraphrased into the minutes as follows:

The signers say they are glad when the time comes to meet together in Synod, where much good may be done, if we unite as christian brethren should do, in the work of our Master, Jesus Christ, building on the foundation which he has laid, so that our work may stand forever. They say our Synod has been attacked on every side unfair and unchristian minds who would annihilate our Synod and church, if it were in their power. They say they do not feel at all discouraged at this, knowing as they do that the true church of Christ has always been persecuted. "Luther says," they say: "He that cannot suffer the persecution of Ishmael is not meet to be called a christian." They further state that they have Rev. G. L. Hunt as their regular preacher, and are highly pleased with his services and hope he may continue with them. They also acknowledge a visit from Deacon G. S. Paysour who preached the glad tidings of the gospel to them, and bid him go on in the good work of Christ. They assure Synod that she has the good wishes and prayers of their congregation. "Let us fight a good fight," is their motto. They request Synod to meet in their church.⁹⁶

A year later, Daniel Heffner was the delegate to the meeting held at Bethel Church in Gaston County, and the Synod printed a synopsis of his petition:

... admonishes the members of Synod to adhere strictly to the old Lutheran doctrine, as it was taught by our forefathers. They say: "Let us maintain and keep this doctrine in purity, and hand it down to posterity as it was delivered to us." They believe that the doctrine Luther taught is perfectly sound and Scriptural, but that it is counterfeited to a great extent by men who claim to be Lutherans, but who teach any other doctrine but the doctrine that Luther taught. Some people might think that they put too much stress on Luther's teachings; but he taught the word of God, and urged it upon his followers to keep it pure. "So let us prove ourselves good watchmen on the walls of Zion, that the people may not be deceived and led astray by every new doctrine which comes among us." God's word is like himself, unchangeable, and will be to all eternity.--They invite us to hold our next session of Synod in their church.⁹⁷

At this meeting, the subject of temperance was belabored, a resolution was passed that the next meeting be at St. John's in 1875, and that *Objections against a General Synod* be attached to the minutes of the 1872/1873 meetings.⁹⁸ The *Objections* were originally written by the Tennessee Synod against the North Carolina Synod's association with the synods of Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland and Virginia, etc., about fifty years earlier, and were inserted as a reminder to the Tennessee Synod of their founders' previous positions.

When the 1874 Tennessee Synod meeting was held in Pilgrim's Church, Davidson County, Alfred J. Fox of Newton, and J. M. Smith of "Canova," were selected to a committee on the "State of the Church." Their report included the following commentary:

Some of our congregations are considerably annoyed by the continual assaults of a man who represents a small faction, who call themselves Lutherans, who, indeed claim to be the only true Lutherans in the country. They may be sound in doctrine, but are, to say the best of them, very irregular in their practices, and many of them are disorderly in their conduct.⁹⁹

The Tennessee Synod Re-Organized held its 14th conference at St. John's on October 9th and 10th, 1875. Rev. G. L. Hunt was still the pastor of one of the St. John's Lutheran congregations, and was present with layman, Mr. G. A. Brady. On that day, Father Hunt performed a confirmation service, whereby twenty-four souls were added to the Church. At this meeting, the St. John's congregation again petitioned the Synod, as the minutes report:

It is gratifying to them (St. John's) to be able to say they have had regular services by Rev. G. L. Hunt, knowing that he preaches the gospel word of salvation in its purity. They desire him to continue with them. They desire to be visited by the younger ministers of our body, who also preach the true gospel of salvation and wish to see more such engage in the good work, . . . They invoke the blessing of

96. *Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized, During its 12th and 13th Sessions, Held at St. Paul's and Bethel Churches, N. C., in September 1872 and 1873*, (Bristol, TN, 1874), pp. 2-4.

97. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

98. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-10.

99. *TN Synod Minutes-1874*, p. 15.

God upon all who labor in the cause of Christ, that they may be enabled to fight their enemies, not with carnal weapons, but spiritual, and mighty through God &c. This they ever pray for Christ's sake. Amen.100

Evidence of continued strife between the two Synods is manifest by several petitions which referred to "slandorous assertions" made by the "so-called" Tennessee Synod, to which the Synod adopted a resolution, "if the (so called) Tenn. Synod, refer to us in their slang expressions, that they tell us plainly and our reply will be forthcoming."101

A. E. Sipe presented a petition to the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized in 1877, which was published by Synod:

... stating that the time is drawing nigh when we can meet together again in Synod, (God willing,) to consult on the doctrine which Jesus Christ has laid down as an infallible rule of faith and practice, for all his people. The signers admonish Synod to keep the doctrine of Christ in its original purity, through his own help; to be watchful, for the Church has her enemies of the worst form. They express satisfaction with their present minister, G. L. Hunt, and hope he may continue with them. They are glad to see our young ministers making such good progress in preaching Christ and him crucified, and caution them to let the word of God be their only guide. Our Synod has many good wishes from them, and they beseech us all to continue in the good work before us, "going on conquering and to conquer."102

A committee of Pastors G. L. Hunt, M. L. Carpenter, and D. C. Huffman was appointed to compose a thesis on the points of difference between the Re-Organized Synod and the Tennessee Synod.103

At the 1879 meeting, H. L. Sigmon was the St. John's delegate, and presented a petition similar to that of the previous session, but stated that they acknowledged "occasional visits from the younger ministers of our Synod, and are gratified at their interest in their Master's calling." The Synod included in its minutes, *Report of Committee on Points of Difference*. In this, the Adam Miller controversy was resurrected, but not by name, and the Tennessee Synod's new constitution was critically discussed.104

Once again in 1881, G. A. Brady was delegate to the Re-Organized Synod's biennial meeting, and presented a petition describing his congregation as being in a "flourishing condition" due to an increase in membership and Christian piety. Little business was conducted other than the arrangements to have catechisms republished. Only a few passing comments were directed at the Tennessee Synod. Had the war of words subsided?105

By the early 1880's, the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized had not experienced much growth, with a total communicant membership of about five hundred, as compared to the four hundred petitioners in behalf of Adam Miller in 1847. Churches in Tennessee had generally withdrawn several years before, leaving the small nucleus of churches in Catawba, Lincoln, Gaston, and Alexander Counties of North Carolina. The Synod was chronically afflicted with a shortage of pastors. Higher educational facilities were beyond the means of the small Synod, and it had staunchly resisted association with them on constitutional grounds. They had seen pastors and congregations come and go, and there had been periods when several years lapsed between meetings. The financial condition of the Synod was questionable, as they struggled year after year with the inability to finance the publication of the essential church materials -- hymn books, catechisms, etc.. The situation was not very optimistic without some outside alliance.106

100. *Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized, During its 14th Session, Held in St. John's Church, Catawba Co., N. C., From October 9th to 10th, 1875*, (Near Dallas, N. C., 1876), pp. 2-5.

101. *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 6, 8.

102. *Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, Re-Organized, During its 15th & 16th Sessions, The former held at Antioch Church, Gaston County, N. C., from September 15-18, 1877, The latter at Miller's Church, Catawba Co., N. C., from Sep. 6-9, 1879, To Which are Annexed Some Essays on Points of Difference*, (Newton, N. C., 1879), p.4.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

104. *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 11-50.

105. *Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod (Re-Organized) during its 17th Session, Held in Bethel Church, Gaston County, N. C. October 1st, 2nd and 3rd, '81, To Which is Annexed a Treatise on the Eldership, by the Rev. G. L. Hunt, Pastor of the Evan. Lutheran Church, Newton, N. C.*, (Piedmont Press, Hickory: 1881), no page numbers.

106. Rev. R. E. Golladay, B. D., *History of the Concordia District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, 1877-*

In 1882, G. L. Hunt sent a letter to Rev. E. L. S. Tressel, President of the Concordia District of the Joint Synod of Ohio. This District has a curious history bearing roots in the Tennessee Synod. In 1866, several pastors and congregations in Virginia petitioned the Tennessee Synod to form a separate Synod, and honorable dismissal was to be granted under a few reasonable conditions. The original attempt was not very successful, and there was some dissension among the Virginia brethren. After several meetings, "The Evangelical Lutheran Concordia Synod of Virginia" was organized, but was never particularly strong. At its last meeting in 1876, an announcement was made that the Concordia Synod had been accepted as a member of the Joint Synod of Ohio. Between 1876 and 1877, the Concordia Synod evolved into the Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio. Upon receipt of the invitation from G. L. Hunt, Tressel made a visit to North Carolina to investigate the situation in North Carolina.¹⁰⁷

On March 17, 1883, Pastors G. L. Hunt, D. C. Huffman, and M. L. Carpenter met in a recitation room of Concordia College with P. C. Henkel, J. M. Smith, J. C. Moser, R. A. Yoder, and J. S. Koiner -- all the Tennessee Synod Pastors from the Conover vicinity. After a lengthy discussion involving doctrine, it appeared to some of the participants that there were grounds for hope that the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized and the parent Synod could agree.¹⁰⁸

Hunt mentioned that his congregations were in need of hymn books, and it was stated that the Tennessee Synod's *Church Book* might be appropriate. This would have been very practical, as many of the Re-Organized congregations were sharing facilities with those of the Tennessee Synod. Hunt, then, expressed preference towards the Ohio Synod's book. It was pointed out that use of Ohio's book would do nothing to promote a union, as the Tennessee Synod disagreed with the expression "*true* body" in Ohio's communion liturgy, as it was not of Biblical origin.¹⁰⁹

In late afternoon, there was a suggestion that another discussion might prove profitable, and the younger pastors of the Re-Organized Synod seemed to favor this. Pastor Hunt then stated that he then wished to have some others in attendance -- "with whom he could call brethren, with whom he could say the Lord's Prayer" -- referring to men from the Ohio Synod. The Tennessee pastors saw no useful purpose in inviting the Ohio Synod into an issue that had remained a local affair for decades. When pressed as to whom Hunt wanted to invite, he mentioned the name of E. L. S. Tressel, of Baltimore. Henkel and Smith immediately expressed their objection to a meeting with Tressel, as past encounters had not been mutually beneficial. Hunt insisted on Tressel's presence, and future meetings did not look favorable under this condition.¹¹⁰

In 1883, a final advance was made toward the Tennessee Synod. A letter, signed by G. L. Hunt, M. L. Carpenter, D. C. Huffman, and C. H. L. Schuette, requested a "free conference" with members of the Tennessee Synod in or near Conover on approximately the 16th of October. Notices were published locally that the intention of this conference was to discuss "points of difference between the two bodies with the view of adopting a basis of union."¹¹¹

The timing was intended for the convenience of the Tennessee Synod, as its annual meeting was being held in the Chapel of Concordia College beginning October 13th. But the date was also intended for their own convenience, as the last meeting of The Tennessee Synod Re-Organized was also being held nearby -- at St. John's Church. The name, Schuette, was not that of a local pastor, but the Tennessee Synod pastors had probably heard of him, as he was a professor from Capital Seminary in Columbus, Ohio.

By the date of the "Free Conference," transactions at St. John's were already completed.

The Tennessee Synod appointed a committee to "meet the undersigned individuals of said letter, and ascertain the direct aim and purpose of such proposed conference." The committee reported that they "had a short interview with them, and that they furnished us no definite response, but intimated that, as their meeting had

¹⁰⁷ 1902, (Columbus, Ohio: 1903), p. 21, is the source for the number of communicants in 1884.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 5, 20. Henkel, pp. 167, 173-175.

¹⁰⁸ J. S. Koiner, "How was It--Why was It?", *Our Church Paper*, XIV:23, 10 June 1886, hereafter cited *OCP.*

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Henkel, p. 221. *The Newton Enterprise*, 13 Oct. 1883, portions of the article are damaged.

adjourned, it was too late at this time for such conference."¹¹² There was no "free conference" and there now remained no possibility of reunion.

The minutes of the St. John's meeting cannot be located for verification of the details, but the results have come forth elsewhere. Leaders of the Joint Synod of Ohio were in attendance at the meeting, including President M. Loy and Rev. Prof. Schuette, the latter who signed the original invitation.¹¹³ The discussions resulted in the following resolution, dated October 13, 1883:

That this synod make application to be received as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Concordia District of the Joint Synod of Ohio, and, resolved, that this resolution be submitted for final action to our congregations, and resolved that if the congregations concur in the above resolution, the officers of this synod see to it that the application be made to the Concordia Synod in due form.¹¹⁴

The Tennessee Synod Re-Organized congregations concurred. For in 1884, Rev. M. L. Carpenter traveled to Baltimore to present the church and pastoral applications for membership in the Concordia District of the Joint Synod of Ohio. The following application was presented to a special Committee, with that of Miller's Church listed in the Minutes:

Worthy brethren in Christ—having become satisfied through your Minutes and other publications, and also through personal acquaintance and correspondence that you as a body teach the Word of God in its purity, and administer the holy Sacraments according to the institution of Christ, and hold to the Confessions of our dear Church as faithful expositions of the Word of God, and have a practice consistent therewith; and furthermore, having carefully examined and discussed the revised constitution of Joint Synod, and adopted it as our own:

Resolved, that we, the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod Re-organized, herewith apply to the Honorable Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States to be received as an integral part of your body, as we are one in doctrine with said Synod.¹¹⁵

The congregations of St. Paul's and Haase added the following historical dilemma to their application:

We thought proper before effecting a union with you to make some efforts to unite with our neighbors of Tennessee Synod, so-called, but in vain. While some individuals among them seemed disposed to unite with us upon a truly Lutheran basis, yet as a body they have declined to meet with us and discuss real or supposed points of difference between us. In fact, the majority—and among this majority, some who are chiefs—have treated us with utter contempt, so that we cannot go with them without doing violence to our consciences and becoming partners of their faults.¹¹⁶

To which the Committee recommended:

Your committee find that this resolution has been complied with, that these brethren are in doctrinal accord with us, and are willing to co-operate with us in the work of the Church on the basis of our constitution, therefore recommend that they be admitted as members of this District upon their application.¹¹⁷

The discussion and predictable results were:

112. Henkel, p. 221. "Short interview" was likely penned in the mildest possible language.

113. Golladay, p. 20.

114. *Minutes of the Eighth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Ev. Luth. Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, Held in St. Peter's Church, Baltimore, Md., from April 30 to May 6, 1884.* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1884), p. 17, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick, donated by Mark Smith to the Lineberger Library, Southern Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbia, SC.

115. *Ibid.*, p. 18. No petition from St. John's was published in the Minutes.

116. *Ibid.*

117. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

It was remarked in synod that, inasmuch as the pastors desiring admission into our synod are not all present, their reception in this way might seem to be out of the regular order and method. But the fact is, that virtually everything has been done that the strictest order could require. Our President has conferred with those persons, the Vice President of Joint Synod has done the same, with favorable results. A colloquy has virtually been held, so that there is nothing in the way of the reception of the applicants.

The report was then adopted, and in accord with the recommendation of the committee the following brethren, with their congregations (congregations 8 and missions 5), were unanimously received: Pastors D. C. Huffman, M. L. Carpenter, G. L. Hunt.

In so doing, the former Re-Organized Synod shed the long-defended, original, Tennessee Synod Constitution in favor of Ohio's. It joined a Synod which endorsed educational institutions and a missionary organization -- ideas which had recently been strongly criticized. It accepted regulatory control and possible future financial assistance from a superior body, the faintest notion of which had been historically spurned in no uncertain terms. Yet, if this feisty Synod and its message were to endure and grow, outside assistance from a cooperative Synodical organization was a necessity.

At time of merger, there were only three pastors. In addition to St. John's, the congregations consisted of St. Paul's, Haase, Miller's, Pisgah (Alexander), Bethel (Gaston), Ebenezer (Lincoln), and Luther Chapel (Lincoln).¹¹⁸

The Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod Re-Organized ceased to exist, and the Joint Synod of Ohio moved into North Carolina and St. John's Church. The meeting where the final negotiations were consummated occurred on a hilltop overlooking Lyle's Creek, about three miles north of Conover, North Carolina.

At this point, the Adam Miller story and its aftermath have been followed for nearly 40 years, and it is understandable that the previous St. John's historians were reluctant to present it, and preferred to summarize as follows:

While Rev. Adam Miller served the Lutheran group the Tenn. Synod sustained a morals charge against him, which he denied. A part of the congregation maintained confidence in him and retained him as their pastor. They claimed and received one-fourth interest in the property.¹¹⁹

The advent of the Joint Synod of Ohio brought its greater influence and financial resources. Within the next two decades, more pastors were provided, many of the older congregations grew and were strengthened, several new congregations were organized, and higher education was promoted and financially assisted. With additional pastors and the availability of synodical subsidies for their support, new Lutheran churches also began to appear--three in the territory surrounding St. John's. The Ohio Synod grew and maintained a highly visible presence in the Catawba Valley until the mergers in the latter part of the twentieth century erased its name from the records.

The synodical disagreements did not abate, were to continue for several decades under a new name, and were partially due to doctrinal disputes half a continent away and a few local movements which served to aggravate them.

Several reflections of the events of this chapter deserve commentary from one who has had the unusual challenge of approaching this story from the perspectives of both contending Lutheran congregations worshipping in the same house.

The Lincoln County Courts convicted Reverend Adam Miller of the immorality charge, which he denied until his parting breath.

The carefully-drawn Constitution of the Tennessee Synod clearly intended for the Synod to be an advisory body, and bestowed the power of pastoral discipline upon the individual congregations. Perhaps this was a well-conceived principle of near-genius status, or maybe it was a fatal flaw due to an over-reaction to prior injustices. Synodical actions from 1845 through 1847, due to no shortage of personal differences, display the first obvious deviation from the unmistakable, and plainly-worded, intentions of the founding fathers -- and troubles ensued immediately. Over the loud objections of father George Easterly and several congregations, the Tennessee Synod had begun to exercise additional control and authority over its pastors, congregations, and people. This was not unlike the political manner that Philip Henkel had once compared to "a few narrow-hearted Despots." By that

118. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

119. Carroll O. Smith, "St. John's Church in Catawba County, North Carolina One Hundred and Twenty-Five Years Old", *Theological Monthly*, Vol. V, (1925), hereafter cited as *Smith*, 1925.

time, the second generation had gained control, and the Tennessee Synod had begun to drift, although still very orthodox in matters of doctrine and practice. The revised Constitution, adopted by the Tennessee Synod in 1866, and again in 1883, with full sincerity of intention, was a manifestation of this trend, where missions, beneficiary education, a treasury, approval and expulsion of ministers, and numerous other regulatory-like entanglements crept into its wording. While many of the assaults from the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized may be properly viewed as reactionary, defensive, and froth with the biased emotion and pride of their writers, others were extremely well-founded and worthy of serious consideration. All fell on equally-deaf ears. If the Tennessee Synod could not be called to attention by the Adam Miller case, regardless of his guilt or innocence, its third generation was ill-prepared for the challenges it faced under the new Constitution and the storm cloud already gathering on the horizon.

Had the Tennessee Synod reacted to Adam Miller in a more conciliatory manner, could the results have been different? Probably not! The affected congregations were divided into two camps -- those who revered and respected Adam Miller as their pastor, and those who wanted nothing whatsoever to do with him. Schism seems to have been eminent, regardless of the actions of the Tennessee Synod. If a congregation is divided over personally-emotional and local issues, no action of Synod could have served as amicable adjustment. Unavoidably, the Tennessee Synod found itself in the role of a helpless and completely inept arbitrator.

These controversies caused all area Lutherans to reflect on the traditional Confessions, synodical organization, and the proper role for church government. All three Synods which Paul Henkel was instrumental in organizing (and no other) were now serving Lutheran congregations in and around Catawba County, North Carolina.¹²⁰

All was not well with the divided St. John's Lutherans during this period. And the Union Church at St. John's now housed three congregations, which shared ownership of the property for nearly one century.

Let he that is without sin cast the first stone. John 8:7

120. The North Carolina Synod had been serving the Newton congregation which became Beth-Eden, and the "Catawba Mission," which possibly became Thyatira, near the Island Ford [*TN Synod Minutes--1869*, p. 56]. When attempts were made by these congregations to join the Tennessee Synod, they determined that they could not do so without jeopardizing their property rights.

Chapter 8

SONS OF ST. JOHN'S

My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Proverbs 3 1, 4, 6.

Members of St. John's were active in local politics, and the church was used for such gatherings, as it was a central meeting place in the community. Up to the year 1840, the area was the northern part of Lincoln County. The area around St. John's was in the township known as "Long Town," and the area to the north was "Flint Rock." As the population grew, it became increasingly burdensome for the citizens to travel nearly twenty-five miles across dirt roads to the courthouse in Lincoln for routine legal business, such as registration of a deed, jury duty, and other routine civil functions. The St. John's, St. Peter's, and St. Stephen's/Miller's communities were most inconvenienced by the geography of Lincoln County, and the location of its county seat.

A series of petitions was generated in the area to create a "new" county, with John Yount and others proposing that the line be drawn through the middle of the Lincoln Court House. Many of the signers were active members of the various St. John's congregations, and some were respected community leaders.¹

In 1842, the Legislature acknowledged the petitions, and Catawba County came into existence. Frederick Hoke, a member of St. John's since its formative years, was appointed first chairman of the new county court and also acted as Justice of the Peace. The first session of court was held in the house of Matthias Barringer. In 1820, Matthias signed the St. John's petition in support of David Henkel, but he was surely a member of a church nearer to his home by 1842.

By the 1850's the fabric of Catawba County was gradually moving towards industrialization. Though still primarily agrarian, family incomes were supplemented by small home specialty workshops, such as blacksmith, cobbler, tanner, tombstone makers, coopers, and wagon makers. Women could also help with family support through weaving, spinning, and sewing. This was an extension of the self-sufficiency of the previous generations. The great Carolina forest was being tamed and utilized by the advent of lumber mills, and wood-frame construction began to replace log houses during this period, creating the necessity of "house carpenters." The area also had a few doctors, teachers, and merchants.²

Other events were occurring which drastically altered the lifestyle of the St. John's community. The Western North Carolina Railroad was chartered, and construction began. The importance of this major transportation link was felt as its construction grew nearer and nearer to this section. It later provided a ready access for the bountiful crops and timber products of Catawba County to the distant market-places and port cities.

At the beginning of this period, the Tennessee Synod was wrestling with the Adam Miller issue, resulting in a second Lutheran congregation worshipping in the same facility.

Religious and academic higher education was a rising concern. In 1851, the German Reformed congregations' efforts were culminated with the charter of Catawba College in Newton. Youth of various religious pursuits attended the first college in Catawba County.

For the next half century, the Tennessee Synod Lutherans were influenced by two pastors who grew up in the northern Catawba County area, who were very close allies, who shared St. John's pulpit, and whose services to the congregation are so intertwined that to separate them by a written contrivance known as a chapter serves no useful purpose.

In 1830, a ten year old child watched his father, as he became ill and soon died. He stood over a grave at St. John's on a sad day a year later, and caught the last view of his father's physical being. He knew of his father's

1. Presslar, pp. 219-221.

2. N. C. Census - 1860, with the trades all being in the Long Town or Flint Rock townships.

convictions, his belief in the Lord, and his desire to spread the gospel among Lutherans in this area and far away places. He knew preaching was a hard job. Many days, in all extremes of weather, would be spent traveling from church to church, community to community, and house to house, in order to perform to the Lord's purpose.

Cyprian Polycarp Henkel was the son of David Henkel, and grand-son of pioneer missionary Paul Henkel. He also had real estate connections via his father to the St. John's community. And last, he had much energy and natural intellect, and was committed to the spread and nurturing of Lutheranism in the Catawba Valley. Although he was not born "a Son of St. John's," he grew up as one and is, at the very least, an adopted "son" of the Lutheran congregation.

Among his early school teachers were Timothy Moser and Abel J. Brown, both of whom became pastors in the Tennessee Synod. Henkel was ordained as a Deacon at the Synod meeting of 1844, and became a pastor on October 17, 1846. His first sermon was delivered at St. Peter's in May 1843. Soon, he became the primary preacher for the Tennessee Lutherans at St. John's, as well as Friendship, Grace, Trinity, Miller's, Daniel's, Christs, and St. Paul's.³ How could one man serve this many congregations?!

His second sermon was delivered at St. John's, presumably also in May of 1843. His records of the remainder of the decade are scant and incomplete. He preached only occasionally at St. John's through 1846. However, "on the 3 Sunday in June 1847, P. C. Henkel commenced preaching regular at St. John's and from the above date to Saturday before the 3 Sunday in January 1850 he preached 31 sermons. And from Jan. 1850 to the 3rd Sunday in May 1851, 8 sermons more which makes in all 39." Thirty-nine sermons in about four years is about ten per year, which was about average during this era.⁴ Henkel's abilities in the pulpit were described by one of his contemporaries and former teacher:

... Henkel is a man of substantial and useful, rather than of showy and ornamental literary and scientific attainments. He is well versed in theology, especially Lutheran theology in its distinctive features. He is a good preacher, distinguished for the plainness of his style and the earnestness of his manner, as well as for his great familiarity with the word of God, and his constant appeal to it in support of his positions.⁵

In 1856, another preacher commenced his labors to the St. John's Lutherans. The twenty-five-year-old's name was John Melancthon Smith, who had been ordained as a Deacon at that year's annual Tennessee Synod meeting. Deacon Smith was a true "son of the congregation," as he was the son of David and Catherine (nee Little) Smith. His grandparents were John, Sr. (former Deacon and Elder) and Catherine Mauser Smith, and Peter (Jr.) and Catherine Hunsucker Little. To extend his lineage one more generation would reveal George Smith, Peter Little, Sr., Esq. (former deacon), Johannes Theobold (Devault) Hunsucker, and Frederick Mauser—all early German settlers in the area, and most of whom are buried in St. John's cemetery. This young Pastor was commencing a long career, and later proved to be a dominant figure in the history of St. John's, and other Catawba, Alexander, and Iredell County Lutherans in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁶

The combined eras of Henkel and Smith were that of epidemic, war, re-construction, internal friction, and higher education.

In the early 1850's, P. C. Henkel was spread too thin. There was obviously a shortage of competent Lutheran ministers in the Tennessee Synod. Spread of the gospel to other geographical areas was surely important to the Tennessee Synod, but established congregations were not to be ignored.

Although Pastor Henkel did not keep an accurate personal diary during the 1843-1851 period, the granite of St. John's Cemetery did an excellent job of this, and preserved fragments of history for posterity. Amazingly, there is not a single readable tombstone displaying a date of death between the years 1843 and 1850, inclusive. Henkel's Journal lists only the funeral of "Widow Deal" at St. John's during this period. J. M. Smith's diary does not list a St. John's funeral. These are surprising statistics, demonstrating the general health and well-being of this period. The next two decades were not so kind.

3. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1843-1846. Henkel, pp. 107, 113. Abel J. Brown, "A Trip to North Carolina," OCP, XIII:6, 12 February 1885.

4. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1843-1851.

5. Brown, "A Trip to North Carolina," cited above.

6. Genealogical information from the files of Gwendolyn Bost Sherrill, Conover, NC. Henkel, p. 146.

During 1851, at least seven deaths, most of whom were adults, occurred at St. John's. 7

Poly (his nick-name rhymes with "holy") Henkel proceeded to occasion St. John's for divine services from 1851 through 1853 at about five visits per year. The Holy Sacraments were administered once in 1852 and 1853, and at least ten deaths occurred, with children and elderly at about equal frequency. Beginning in 1854, Henkel delivered seven regular sermons and one sacramental service. Nine deaths are known, with the oldest being twenty-five years old. He also performed a funeral at a fairly new congregation, "Piney Grove," which later was named Bethel. Piney Grove was a school house that became a preaching station for Henkel and others. There must have been a family or community grave yard nearby. The following year, Henkel conducted six regular services at St. John's, one communion service, and reports funerals for four. At least nine other deaths are recorded, with most being children. Regular services increased to eight in the year 1856, with one communion service. Ten deaths, including four children, are listed. 8

One humorous tale from about the year 1852 was long remembered by the audience. An unnamed pastor (probably Henkel) was delivering a sermon on the subject of hell. After about twenty minutes, he became somewhat confused in his delivery, and paused. After a minute or two, he continued: "See here, brethren, I think we could spend our time more profitably in trying to find out the best way to escape hell, than by trying to find out what kind of place it is; for I can assure you, it will be *bad enough*, if any of you should get there." 9

Newly-ordained Deacon J. M. Smith delivered his first sermon on July 13, 1856 at Miller's Church, where he "engaged their attention for the space of one hour and a half." On the third Sunday of August, Smith preached at his home church "before a large assembly," and assisted Henkel at the October communion service. Smith had worked as a school teacher, including a term at the St. John's school, to pay his way through several terms at Catawba College, where he was an assistant instructor at the Reformed institution for a brief period. During 1856, Smith was living with Henkel, and was receiving theological instruction from the senior pastor, as was customary training towards full ordination in the Tennessee Synod. 10

The year of 1857 was the year of greatest personal tragedy the congregation had seen. The previous wars and the twentieth century epidemics of tuberculosis, typhoid fever, and polio seem insignificant when compared to this year. An epidemic spread through the community, which family histories describe as "flux", "colitis", or "dysentery". Waves of typhoid fever also took their tolls, and may truly be the disease causing the intestinal-related deaths. No less than thirty deaths occurred in the St. John's community of congregations, including Henkel's own son. Henkel reports thirteen St. John's funerals in the months of July, August, and September alone! 11

The family of Frederick A. and Agline Sigmon Smith was the hardest hit, as five children died within a two week period. Henkel performed the funeral on August 26. Five consecutive gravestones in the cemetery display the names of Ephraim T. (1837-1857), H. Caroline (1845-1857), Burtain W. (1848-1857), Lorah E. (1852-1857), and Susan A. M. (1855-1857), and serve as permanent graphic reminders of the tragedy of 1857. 12

To emphasize how widespread these epidemics were, a list of normally-unexpected deaths from June through September is as follows:

J. F. Abernathy 1834 to 6/28/1857

(tombstone)

7. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1851. *Catawba County Cemeteries, Vol. IV*, pp. 85, 92-94, 96, 105..

8. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1851-1856. *Catawba County Cemeteries, Vol. IV*, pp. 88, 89, 91-94, 96-97, 100, 133.

9. "Resignation—Call Accepted," *OCP*, XVII:18, 1 May 1889. This apparently was written by an editor, one or more of whom were closely related to P. C. Henkel.

10. J. M. Smith Diary, introduction, 1856. C. A. Weiss, "Memorial for J. M. Smith," *The Lutheran Witness*, Vol. XXXII, No. 19, (Sept. 11, 1913), pp. 146-147, hereafter cited *TLW*.

11. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1857. The three terms used to describe the epidemic came from descendants of the B. Elmore Smith siblings. There was never a doubt as to the name of the disease during these conversations.

12. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, p. 97. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1857. Simmons Family Bible (survivor Frances A. Smith married John Simmons). Full names and dates of the children, from the family Bible are Susan Ales Madorah Smith (12 June 1855 - 19 July 1857), Lorah Ettah (also spelled Etta) Smith (10 November 1852 - 23 July 1857), Harriet (also seen Harret) Caroline Smith (died 29 July 1857), Burton (also spelled Burtan) Winston Smith (21 January 1848 - 30 July 1857), and Ephraim Theodore Smith (died 3 August 1857). This Bible entry appears to be in the handwriting of P. C. Henkel.

Frances C. Baker 1855 to 8/1/1857	(tombstone)
William J. Brady 1841 to 8/4/1857	(P.C.H., Sat. before 3rd Sun. Sept.)
Florance V. Canup 1855 to 7/22/1857	(tombstone)
Franklin S. Hefner 1849 to 7/4/1857	(possibly P.C.H. funeral, 3rd Sun. Aug., Lewis Hefner's son)
Philip A. Henkel 1849 to 7/20/1857	(P.C.H.'s son, funeral by J.M.S.)
Lunda E. Henkel 1856 to 7/24/1857	(Cicero Henkel's daughter, funeral by J.M.S.)
Henry D. Hoke 1856 to 8/2/1857	(tombstone)
Colen Bruce Hoke 1857 to 8/22/1857	(P.C.H. funeral, 4th Sun. Aug., David Hoke's child)
Francis Hunsucker 1847 to 7/1/1857	(tombstone)
(Abel Isenhour's Children, next two)	
Wilburn J. Isenhower 1851 to 7/21/1857	(P.C.H. funeral, 8/1/1857)
Joseph G. Isenhower 1854 to 7/11/1857	(P.C.H. funeral, 8/1/1857)
Henry S. Pierce 1855 to 7/11/1857	(tombstone)
Unnamed	(P.C.H. funeral, 8/12/1857)
Logan Pope's child	
Unknown	(P.C.H. funeral, 1st Sat. Sept., 1857)
Eliza R. Sigmon 1856 to 8/8/1857	(possibly P.C.H. funeral, 3rd Sun. Aug., Martin Sigmon's child.)
	(possibly P.C.H. funeral, 3rd Sun. Aug., Martin Sigmon's child)
Angelina L. Sigmon 1857 to 8/11/1857	(P.C.H. funeral, 8/26/1857)
Frederick Sigmon 1840 to 8/25/1857	

Other deaths of the year are apparently unrelated to the epidemics. Henkel preached at a funeral for a Mrs. Bowman in March. J. M. Smith served at the funeral of an unnamed child in October. Other gravestones bear the names of Ellen Isenhour, Mary M. Sigmon, Eliza Sipe, and infant son Wike. Smith served over the funerals of Adam Akerd and his wife on June 8, 1857.¹³

Through the mournful family tragedies, Henkel's congregation was able to hold fairly regular services, with two celebrations of Holy Communion. In March, Henkel was unable to attend the regular service on the third Sunday, and arranged for J. M. Smith to supply. Smith also assisted in the May communion services and preached in September and November of that year.¹⁴

The year 1858 brought a slight return towards normalcy. Henkel preached on the third Sundays of eight months. Smith also served the Lutherans in June and November services. Deaths subsided somewhat, with only five known -- all twenty years old or less.¹⁵

Deacon Smith reports a funeral at St. John's on the Monday of a Pastoral Conference, which was the preparation of local pastors for the upcoming Synodical Meeting. On October 19, 1858, after serving two years as Deacon, J. M. Smith was ordained at the Tennessee Synod meeting held in Lexington, South Carolina. On the first Saturday of November, St. John's heard a sermon delivered by the now-Reverend Smith, with text from Isaiah 1:18:

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.¹⁶

Henkel preached nine times during 1859, always on the third Sunday of the month, and communion was held twice. He reported funerals for only two -- both children. Smith was preaching regularly at St. Peter's, St. Martin's, and Sharon during this year, and is not known to have served St. John's. In May, Smith preached at "Piney Grove" and began preaching at this location more regularly beginning this year.¹⁷

13. *P. C. Henkel Diary*, 1857. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1857. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, p. 133.

14. *P. C. Henkel Diary*, 1857. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1857. Note that the *Smith Diary* reports a sermon on the third Sunday of April, rather than March. Perhaps Smith was present both months.

15. *P. C. Henkel Diary*, 1858. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1858. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV, pp. 133.

16. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1858. Henkel, p. 150.

17. *P. C. Henkel Diary*, 1859. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1859. Smith later preached at St. Peter's and Piney Grove on the same day, which reinforces that

Henkel delivered eight sermons and held communion once in 1860. Eleven tombstones exist in the cemetery with this as the year of death.¹⁸ But the year was far from uneventful to the St. John's community, as by January 3rd, the railroad had arrived about three miles to the South of the church:

The cars [sic] are running with in two miles of my house now, and in a week from now they will run within 3/4 of a mile of my house, . . .

.19

On the third Sunday of October, 1860, the Tennessee Synod honored St. John's as site of its annual convention, and J. M. Smith was named treasurer. During this meeting, many churches from Tennessee withdrew from the Synod with regret, primarily due to the distance of travel to the Synod meetings. They formed the Evangelical Lutheran Holston Synod of Tennessee; thus, the Tennessee Synod became primarily composed of churches in North Carolina, with none from the State where it was founded.²⁰

At least seven regular services were held in 1861, and there is no listing in Henkel's diary of the Lord's Supper. Contagious disease hit the congregation again. Henkel presided over funeral services of at least eleven persons, most of them children. Among them were Henry Bowman's son, Mrs. Longcryer (Catherine, wife of Elias Longcryer, 1810-1861), Logan Dellinger's child, Susan Brinkley's child, Daniel Treffelstadt's son, Marcus Pope, and William Sigman's child (possibly Fultin C., 1860-1861).²¹

Similar to the Smith family in 1857, immeasurable grief hit the Abel Isenhour family, as the Lord took Isenhour's daughters unto himself. This loss was in addition to the Isenhour children who succumbed to disease four years earlier. Henkel performed the funeral ceremony for the Isenhour family on the third Sunday of July.²² These deaths occurred amid the beginning of a national travesty that spawned additional death, destruction, and family and church disruption.

By 1861, the religious considerations of the families of St. John's were obscured by the political issues surrounding them.

I learn from your letter that the abolitionists in your state [VA] have given rise to a goodeal [sic] of excitement and trouble, . . . I would like to hear how matters went, off on the 2nd and 16th of Dec. last when these scamps were hung. There is a considerable excitement here . . . Some few here had their heads shaved and were tarred and feathered, road on rails, and sent off. . . . The time has come here, that an abolitionist must lie low or leave. I consider them the greatest enemy that the slaves have. They have been instrumental in oppressing them very much already. I do not think that they care one cent for the welfare of the slave, or they would show more humanity to the poor whites and even the free darkies they have in the non-slave holding states. I regard the abolitionists as a set of plunderers and murderers and that they have nothing else in view. And as you say, if necessity required it. I would not hesitate to shoulder a musket and help to defend the rites [sic] of our country and firesides.²³

The above quotation was **not** that of a wealthy Catawba County plantation owner holding many slaves! These are the exact written words in the year 1860, by a St. John's Lutheran Pastor -- Cyprian Polycarp Henkel. Henkel's opinion on the slavery and abolition movements were the culmination of several generations of tradition, church attitudes, and the local involvement in the institution of chattel slavery.

The slavery issue that was pressed to divide the country along sectional lines was a phenomenon that grew gradually after the revolutionary war. From the frontier years, slavery was not commonplace among the German

the "Piney Grove" listing was later Bethel.

18. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1859. *Catawba County Cemeteries*, Vol. IV., pp. 95-101.

19. Letter from P. C. Henkel to Socrates Henkel, dated Jan. 3, 1860, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

20. Henkel, p. 153-158.

21. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1861.

22. *Ibid.* No tombstone markers could be located for these children. This diary entry lists the number of daughters as four. The entry is suspect, as the 1860 Census does not include this many daughters in the household. Perhaps the number is simply wrong in the Diary. Could there have been quadruplets in the Isenhour family? Isenhour family contacts around Conover have been unable to reconcile this discrepancy. Abel Isenhour had married Susan Smith, sister of Frederick. Between Susan and Frederick, records reveal ten close family deaths, mostly children, within seven years.

23. Letter from P. C. Henkel to Socrates Henkel, 3 Jan 1860, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

settlers in North Carolina. In Rowan County there were about 100 slaves when it was founded in 1754, and 60 percent of those families who owned them had but a single slave. By the year 1790, there were 1,741 slaves included in a geographically-smaller Rowan County Census. Twelve percent of the German families owned slaves, as compared to nearly thirty-one percent for all nationalities.²⁴

After Lincoln County was formed, the 1790 census revealed that 13.4% of the German families owned slaves.²⁵ The Fifth Militia Company consisted of the northeastern portion of Lincoln County, including the Lyle's Creek area. With about 75% German-speaking population, there were just five slave-owners in nearly one hundred households, with three of the five slave-owners being German-speaking. The total of sixteen slaves is skewed somewhat by one individual who owned nine.²⁶

From a Lincoln County Tax List of the mid-1830's, the St. John's community was in Captain Cowan's district, and was about ninety to ninety-five percent with German-speaking ancestry. Of the 150 taxables on the list, only sixteen owned slaves (and one or two of these were among the few non-Germans). Only four owned more than four slaves, and the maximum was eight by a single taxpayer. However, most of the recognized leaders of the Lutheran congregation at St. John's were listed as slaveowners.²⁷ The custom of slavery was becoming a fact of life in the agrarian south, had made significant inroads into the predominantly Lutheran and Reformed communities, and this trend had not yet reached its maturity.

The percentages grew modestly, until by 1860, the Catawba County townships of Long Town and Flint Rock listed a total of 231 white households of which 47 owned slaves -- about 20 percent. The total slave population was 266 compared to the white population of slightly over 1300. These statistics are skewed upwardly by two wealthy residents who owned 75 slaves between them. The remaining farmers who owned any slaves had an average of three to four, with slightly more females than males.²⁸

The personal examples of pastors who led the St. John's congregations did not discourage the slavery practice. Early pastors Arends and Loretz owned large plantations and acquired several slaves each, at a time when this practice was seldom encountered among area Germans. Philip Henkel, David Henkel, and Adam Miller had owned slaves at one time or other, and P. C. Henkel is also reported to have been a slave owner for a period of time.

From the date of its original construction, St. John's provided a gallery to allow the slaves to participate in the worship services.

The North Carolina Synod meeting of 1806 broached the slavery subject, and recognized the difference in religious heritage of the European masters and the African slaves. They instituted a different policy for the slaves, resolving that baptisms not be performed on children of slaves unless "Christian men and women or masters and mistresses" agree to provide religious instruction.²⁹

At the meeting of October 19, 1814, Catechist John Dreher, from South Carolina, presented an address to Synod on the subject. The trend towards acceptance of slavery was much greater in South Carolina, and the city of Charleston was the center of the slave trading industry. Dreher's address reflected the growing concern of slave owners in his statement that educated slaves may wish to elevate their own status to that of "equal to their

24. William Herman Gehrke, "Negro Slavery among the Germans in North Carolina," *North Carolina Historical Review*, Vol. XII, No. 1, (Raleigh: Journal 1935), pp. 307-308.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 308, cited from F. A. Michaux, "Travels to the West of the Allegheny Mountains in the states of Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, and back to Charleston, by the Upper Carolinas," in Thwaite's, R. G., ed., *Early Western Travels, 1748-1846*, p. 292. This citation makes the claim that, by 1802, "almost all of the German families in Lincoln County owned slaves." I strongly disagree that "almost all" of the German families around St. John's had slaves that early, as is shown by the tax list below.

26. From the 1790 Census, William Whittenberg owned one slave; William Sloan owned three; James Cowan owned one; Simon Jonas owned two; and his son, John Jonas owned nine.

27. Tax List for Captain Covens Co., Lincoln County, N. C., N. C. State Archives, File 060.704.1, undated. This list is between the years of 1831 and 1839 based on the names included thereon. The Elders, former-Elders, or their heirs, owning slaves were Christofor Sigman, 1; Christina Little, 8; John Smith, 3; and Fredrick Hoke, Sr., 4. Also, Joseph, Christian, and William Hunsucker were listed as slave owners. It cannot be determined that this list is complete, as pages could be missing; nevertheless, it did include many of the families living in the St. John's community. From the files of John H. Smith, Newton, NC.

28. *N. C. Census - 1860*; Elizabeth Bray Sherrill, "Slavery," *Stepping Back in Time*, June 1990, pp. 82-83.

29. *N. C. Synod Minutes - 1806*, transl.

masters." There were fears that educated slaves would "show less manageable traits," and thereby, cause a disturbance to the delicate class distinction in place. Dreher felt that the opposite was true, but was very careful to maintain the social balance.

The classes of the society are not changed through Christianity, and we know that through the services of the brothers, the slaves will become Christians. It will not change the class, but will bring forth greater frugality. Therefore, the necessity for all that was approved to be responsible to see that every opportunity is used to preach the Bible to the slaves, and to instruct them also before baptism in practical Christianity, and to recommend all pastors to advise the presidents of their congregations to make a place in the Church for them, where they can listen to the Word of God, because it is not proper that they should sit with the white people.³⁰

The Synod unanimously agreed with Dreher, and reiterated its previous stance, that it was the duty of every slave owner in connection with its Constitution to "have his slaves instructed in religion." A notice was to be sent to all congregations accordingly.³¹

By the 1815 Synod meeting, the slavery resolution had generated "much opposition in South Carolina." Pastor R. J. Miller presented a lecture that "the Bible should be preached to all creatures, and in addition, [he] proved that slaves had belonged to the Christian churches in the time of the apostles in the Apostolic Age," not discouraging the tradition. The Synod upheld the previous year's resolution, but compromised it somewhat. It was left up to the individual congregation to either provide a place in their buildings for common worship between master and slave, or to "build a house for their use." Synod furthered its admonition, and declared "that it was the duty of every pastor and congregation to take care, that they [slaves] might have in some way an opportunity to hear the word of God."³²

A policy on slave baptism was adopted, whereby religious instruction was a prerequisite. A form of probation was established, "when uncertain of the sincerity of their desire to become a Christian through their conduct." After being baptized, slaves were placed under this probation, until "they have proved through their humility that they are Christians." The pastor and the chairman of the Congregation were given the authority to evaluate when these standards were met, and when the slave was allowed to receive the Lord's Supper. The slave's Communion privileges were limited to his master's congregation, and the pastor could refuse the sacrament if "he is convinced through public rumor," that the slave's "conduct is doubtful." While not precluding administration of the sacraments to the slaves, this resolution did not facilitate the practice.³³

A further clarification of the 1806 resolution allowed baptized Negroes to have their children baptized without sponsorship of their masters or mistresses. However, the parents, or other Christian sponsors from their own race, were required to be examined beforehand.³⁴

This resolution did not settle the matters in South Carolina churches, as some wealthy slave-owners felt that the blacks should not be afforded the means of grace, and one South Carolina pastor was convinced that Negroes had no soul.³⁵ When one pastor attempted to follow these directions, he was labeled "a Negro Pastor" and was "turned off" by his congregation. A visiting pastor to South Carolina reported that "the folly of the people as it respects the blacks is to me, the most unaccountable thing that I have met with."³⁶

Slavery had completely become a matter of ownership. In some regions, slaves were viewed similar to livestock, and there was no moral or religious guilt associated with the breaking up of a slave family via the sale of one of its members to a distant owner. This posed difficulties in the baptism policy above, as both Christian parents were not always present, nor could they guarantee that they would be available to offer the required Christian instructions years later. This uncertain family structure caused further difficulties towards the traditional

30. *N. C. Synod Minutes - 1814*, transl. Note that the translation is not in fluid sentence form, and punctuation has been added.

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*, 1815.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. Gottlieb Schober to Solomon Henkel, 20 May 1816, Old Salem Archives, Gottlieb Schober Correspondence, 1816-1819, #3995. The SC pastor was Rev. Franklow, who was described less than glamorously in this letter and the next.

36. R. J. Miller to Gottlieb Schober, 12 June 1816, Gottlieb Schober Papers, Old Salem Archives. This letter appears to be a report of a missionary trip to Synod, and there were many troubles brewing in S. C.

marriage rites. Rather than subvert the social status quo by attacking the root of the problem, the Synod chose to seek a reasonable alternative for marriage within the accepted system.

Christian negroes if they want to get married shall promise in a congregation of their own, to remain faithful to each other as long as they live together.³⁷

This does not say, "as long as ye both shall live." The policy allowed for the re-marriage of a "Christian who has lost his wife or husband." Under these conditions, it was a pastor's duty to "impress upon them the order of the matrimonial wedlock (ties, duties)."³⁸

The prolific writings of David Henkel include a paragraph or two on slavery. A long dissertation on moral evils and the way to salvation was included in one of his earliest published efforts (in English), entitled *The Loud Trumpet of Futurity, or a Few Reflections on Future Things*. While certainly not an abolitionist, his opinion of the issue of slavery in 1817 is both historically and religiously revealing on a local level:

Masters and slave-holders appear in two classes. Many have treated their orphan servants and slaves with lenity [sic, ?leniency?] and charity. They never willfully had let them suffer for the want of sufficient food and raiment, and provided carefully for their education and future welfare. But many masters have treated their servants and slaves with savage cruelty. They laid heavy tasks upon them, which if they could not perform, they were severely scourged; and never gave them sufficient food to subsist upon and raiments to cover their nakedness. Behold! now, not only the cruel barbarian slave-holders, but also the Virginian, Carolinian, Georgian and other American negro-masters blush and quake. The holy scriptures teach us, that the just have compassion on their beasts; but those hard hearted masters showed no mercy towards their fellow creatures. What will they shortly experience, but eternal imprisonment?³⁹

Henkel viewed all personal abuses as wrong. He felt it the duty of the father to ensure the welfare and education of his children, and instructed the husbands to act in a kind manner towards their own wives:

Many husbands may be ranked with the cruel negro-masters, for they treat their wives not much better. . . .⁴⁰

However, he recognized the social relationships, and believed that slaves could also experience the same "eternal imprisonment" for improper behavior:

The same must also be applied to servants and slaves, who disobeyed the lawful commands of their masters.⁴¹

This was probably the typical sermon theme to expect. Masters, you have the Christian duty to treat your slaves humanely. Slaves, obey your masters.

David Henkel practiced what he preached, as his ministry to the slaves, particularly baptisms, was of similar proportion as the white-to-black population of the area around St. John's.⁴²

When the Tennessee Synod was formed, it was initially a group of pastors and churches in Tennessee, with only one pastor and about seven churches from North Carolina. As the settlers spread farther and farther from Charleston, the number of slaves seemed to reduce proportionately. Consequently, the social custom was not as firmly entrenched in the newer frontiers. The slavery subject arose in its third meeting, and prior to the admission of several North Carolina Churches who later connected to it. Tennessean Conrad Keicher posed the question: "Is slavery to be considered a great evil which is tolerated in our land?" The Tennessee Synod took a major stand, when it resolved:

37. NC Synod Minutes - 1815, transl.

38. *Ibid.*

39. David Henkel, *A Loud Trumpet of Futurity, or a Few Reflections on Future Things*, by David Henkel, (Salisbury: Jacob Krider, 1817), pp. 47-48, hereinafter referenced *Loud Trumpet*. Examples of this pamphlet may be found in the UVA Library and at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. It seems to be quite rare. Henkel was only twenty-two years old when this was published.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

42. Daniel Moser's ministry was similar to Henkel's.

that the Synod unanimously consider it a great evil in our land & wish that government, if possible, would devise some means as an antidote to this evil.⁴³

Realizing that this was not about to happen in the near future, "Synod shall also advise every minister to admonish every master to treat his slaves properly, and to exercise his Christian duties towards them." Since the Tennessee Synod was below the Mason-Dixon line, this resolution was of great significance, and would have been expected to excite a few prominent slaveholders in North Carolina; however, not a word of rebuttal is listed in the next year's minutes -- or the years that followed.⁴⁴

Examination of the parochial reports of the Tennessee Synod, by decade, displays the relative successes and failures of their ministry toward the ever-growing slave population prior to the Civil War.⁴⁵

YEARS	Infant Baptisms	Adult Baptisms	Slave Baptisms	Confirmations	Comments
1820's	5517	443	205	1902	2/3 reporting
1830's	6690	408	250	2569	
1840's	6576	442	28	2828	not complete
1850's	6634	445	244	3647	

Little definitive explanation can be given for the plunge in slave baptisms during the decade from 1840 to 1850. During the first two decades, a large percentage of the slaves had been baptized by one of three pastors -- David Henkel, Philip Henkel, or Daniel Moser. These three pastors were deceased prior to the 1840's, and could account for a portion of the decline in number if their replacements did not actively pursue this growing segment of the population.⁴⁶ Also, the statistics of Adam Miller, who replaced the territory once served by David Henkel, were not being furnished to the Tennessee Synod for at least part of this decade.

It is apparent that local Lutheran policies regarding slave confirmations were restored in the decade immediately prior to the Civil War.

The policies of the Reformed Church were not much different. In 1838, the North Carolina Classis enacted the following:

Whereas, there are yet some churches in our bounds, without room for the coloured people, in the sanctuary, and without provision for their reception into the communion of the Church, therefore be

Resolved, That all such churches be recommended to follow the example of their sister Reformed Churches, and of the churches of other denominations generally, at the South, in providing room and pews for coloured people, in the house of God, and in opening a door for their reception into the communion of the Church wherever their knowledge of the truth, and personal piety, shall render them fit subjects for Christian communion -- and if slaves, by and with the additional requisition of the consent of their masters.⁴⁷

This resolution posed no difficulties at St. John's, as several members of it Reformed congregation were slave owners, and the balcony was available for unity, but with some separation, within the church building.

43. David Henkel, *Report of the Transactions of the third German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Tennessee, etc.*, manuscript of 1822 minutes, Henkel Family Papers, Alderman Library, UVA, Accession No. 8653-c, Box 3.

44. Henkel, p. 52.

45. Statistics are cited from these decades in Henkel's TN Synod History. The NC Reformed Classis Minutes do not distinguish color in their parochial reports.

46. In 1822, David Henkel confirmed 32 slaves, Philip Henkel baptized one, and the other five reporting pastors, **ZERO**. In 1824, Henkel baptized 9 of the 11 slaves reported. In the year 1825, David Henkel, Philip Henkel, and Daniel Moser baptized 19 slaves, which was the entire total reported by the Synod. Later years are similar, but the percentages are not quite so skewed.

47. *NC Reformed Classis Minutes*, 1838.

The delegate from this community to the North Carolina State Convention that considered secession from the United States was Pastor P. C. Henkel. Based on oral tradition, he did not support the movement of secession at that time, but obviously became a strong supporter of the war movement in the South.⁴⁸

On May 20, 1861, North Carolina joined the Confederate States of America, as one of the more reluctant states to do so, and its men were soon mustered into military service.⁴⁹

The first local enlistment occurred on April 27, 1861, in Newton. A total of 126 men joined the army, and the Company became known as the "Catawba Rifles." By September, Reformed member David Pinkney Rowe became Captain of the Company. Members Sylvanus Deal and James Brown were Lieutenants, and Miles A. Yount later became one. Peter F. Smith, brother of Rev. Smith, was a Corporal, who later was advanced to Captain and transferred to another Company. Other St. John's Tennessee Lutheran members included John H. Dellinger, Yodam Lafone, Franklin Miller, Tobias Shook, Marcus Sigman, Joseph Yount, and Sidney L. Yount. Others later enlisted in this company.

As a pastor with decided opinion towards the efforts of the South, Henkel preached a sermon on March 31, 1861 for the future "Catawba Rifles" in Newton. Most of the 1861 enlistments were transported to Camp Mangum, near Raleigh, for training. On the third Sunday of June, Henkel preached in camp for these volunteers, and on the fourth Sunday for those of Haywood and Macon Counties. In August he preached, baptized, and confirmed additional volunteers at the courthouse in Newton.⁵⁰

The next major enlistment of St. John's members occurred under the Hickory tree near the house of recently-deceased Lawson Sigmon, about two or three miles north of St. John's, on October 31, 1861. This Company became known as the "Catawba Wild Cats." The younger of Lawson's and Elizabeth's sons, Nelson, enlisted at the age of eighteen, leaving older brother Davault to fend for his family. Other St. John's members who enlisted on that date included David J. Benick who became a Captain, Labon Cline, Daniel L. Hoke, Martin Hoke who became a Corporal, David Huffman, David Pope, Daniel F. Roseman who became a Lieutenant, Marion J. Roseman who became Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant, Lawson Shook, the aforesaid Nelson Sigman who later became a Sergeant, Adolphus Sigman, William Treffelstadt, J. Quincy Warren, Dr. D. McDuffey Yount who became a Captain, Noah Yount, George W. Yount, and Joshua Yount who became a Lieutenant.

As the War progressed and other young men reached the age of eighteen, and later, seventeen, enlistments grew. By the end of the War, nearly one hundred young men from the St. John's congregations served in the Confederate forces!!

During the Winter of 1861-1862, most area volunteers were camped near Goldsboro, with some movement through that region. By Spring of 1862, the cruel reality of war descended on the congregation. Among the first of the many fallen sons of St. John's was Gilbert Sigmon, who died of pneumonia or typhoid fever in a Manassas, Virginia hospital. His funeral service was held in February. This was soon followed by grief for the David and Susan Cline family, whose son Laban succumbed to typhoid fever at the camp near Weldon, North Carolina. Pastor Smith officiated the funeral on March 29.

The Tennessee Synod meeting of 1862 recognized the trials of the war, and difficulties in the travels of its pastorate and delegates from out of state locations, and little business was conducted.⁵¹ In April of this year, Henkel again traveled to Camp Mangum, to serve the pastoral needs of the soldiers stationed there. The "Catawba Wildcats" with the 38th Regiment was reorganized that same month, and the soldiers were informed that they would be required to serve for three years (instead of one year as previously understood) or for the duration of the war.

In May, Henkel preached for the 46th Regiment of North Carolina Volunteers at Goldsboro, baptizing 7 and confirming 19. The same day, he administered to the 49th North Carolina Regiment, of which Company I (the "Catawba Marksmen") had been organized in the town of Catawba on March 19. In June of that year, Smith followed many area soldiers into Virginia, and preached in a camp near a bluff on the James River.⁵²

48. William Summer Junkin and Minnie Wyatt Junkin, *The Henkel Genealogy 1500-1960*, (Spokane, WA: C. W. Hill Printing Co., 1964) 289.

49. RCC: Mark did not have footnotes for some of the information given about the Civil War. I have been unable to locate his sources for this most significant information. I will let the history stand as Mark has written it.

50. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1861.

51. Henkel, p. 159.

52. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1862. J. M. Smith Diary, 1862. Henkel listed the names of those confirmed at Goldsboro as Robt. Miller, Silas Bovey,

Pinkney Cline, Wm. Propst, Isaac Smith, Franklin Finger, Pinkney [Summit or Taylor?], Hosea Bongamer, Calvin Fry, John Watts, John

North Carolina troops were soon dispatched to Virginia, moving around the vicinities of Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Milford, where they united with General Robert E. Lee's army near the end of May 1862. By the end of June, there was a tragic series of battles in an effort to save Richmond from Federal occupation. Casualties during this "Seven Days Campaign" were among the heaviest of the entire War. St. John's funerals followed for Alfred Barringer, James Brown, Bartlett G. Isenhower, and David Pope. Noah Traffelstadt, who was fatally wounded at Malvern Hill, Virginia, returned home and died from these injuries on July 16. Many other wounded soldiers were released or hospitalized, and most returned into service.

Pastor Smith could report on the tragedy, as he preached in the camp at Drury's Bluff on the James River as these battles were raging.⁵³ As pastors were allowed some freedom of movement among the troops, it is quite likely Smith arranged for the transportation of some the dead and wounded.

During August and September, Generals Lee and Stonewall Jackson regained nearly all of Virginia through the bloody battle of Bull Run. They proceeded into Maryland and were met by General McClelland's Union army, which soundly trounced the Confederates in another bloody battle at Sharpsburg, Maryland, called the Battle of Antietam. The South was forced to retreat towards Fredericksburg and Richmond.

After a service at St. John's in September, Henkel took a trip to Richmond, where he preached October 15 and 16 at Camp Salisbury, baptized 10 and confirmed 15. By the third Sunday in October, he arrived back at St. John's for his regular engagement.⁵⁴

The congregation increased the frequency of its services during this time of strife to nearly once per month, only missing the month of April. Substitute pastors Smith and Hass conducted the May gathering. Henkel performed at least six funerals unrelated to the Civil War.⁵⁵

After the loss of about 12,000 men in the Battle of Fredericksburg in December 1862, the Union troops retreated. The Southern losses were estimated at about 5,000 men, but few casualties included St. John's soldiers. P. C. Henkel soon visited the troops on January 7, 1863 in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and recounted that the war was 1-1/2 miles from the W. R. R. North of the steam sawmill. On the next day, he offered a sermon to the 23rd Regiment of North Carolina troops stationed near Fredericksburg, and also to the 38th Regiment, which included the "Catawba Wildcats" Company. If this were not a day's work, he then went to the 28th Regiment that evening, accompanied by Mr. Miles Herman. The next day he preached to this regiment and baptized Mr. John Clippard from Catawba County, then he returned to the 12th Regiment. On the 10th of the month, Henkel started out for the 57th Regiment, and preached at 11:00 AM the next day. On the 12th, he preached again to the same regiment. The next day, he had begun his journey home. There were young men from St. John's in each of these Regiments. By the third Sunday of the month, he preached again at St. John's. And there were no automobiles in 1863!⁵⁶

For the remainder of 1863, Henkel served St. John's with approximately six regular services, and nine funerals. He also confirmed, in his house, Sylvanus Cline, Joseph Cline, and Casper E. Killian during that year, prior to their enlistment into the war effort. Smith also maintained some presence at St. John's, as he delivered sermons at the Communion weekend in May, and performed four funerals during the year.⁵⁷

The 1863 war campaign in Virginia involved many St. John's men, especially the horrible battle of Chancellorsville in May. While the Union army was defeated, the south suffered great losses. St. John's lost Major D. P. Rowe to this battle. Among the extensive injuries, Sydney Yount lost an arm. Noah Yount, who had to have his leg amputated, later returned to service as a "Wagon Sargent".

The Southern troops then moved up the Shenandoah Valley into Pennsylvania, which set the stage for the most famous, yet devastating, battle in the war -- at Gettysburg. When the smoke cleared on July 3, the combined losses were estimated at 40,000. The St. John's casualties included the death of W. P. Cline, and several who were wounded. Others, including Miles Herman, were listed as "missing," and several were captured and imprisoned. General Lee retreated, and there were few battles, of significance to St. John's families, on the Virginia front for the remainder of the year.

Propst, Wilburn Setzer, Ramson Eads, L. L. Thronburg, Wm. L. Huit, Anderson Huit, F. A. Huit, Lewis Sigman, and J. M. Hass -- nearly all Catawba County surnames. RCC: Anne McAllister notes that this unit was known as the "Catawba Braves".

⁵³ J.M. Smith Diary, 1862.

⁵⁴ P. C. Henkel Diary, 1862.

⁵⁵ P. C. Henkel Diary, 1862. J. M. Smith Diary, 1862.

⁵⁶ P. C. Henkel Diary, 1863.

⁵⁷ P. C. Henkel Diary, 1863. J. M. Smith Diary, 1863.

Other St. John's losses during 1863 included Abel Isenhower, who enlisted in March and died from disease in June. Patrick A. Yount, who enlisted in 1862, died on November 20, 1863.

St. John's was host to the October 17, 1863 Tennessee Synod meeting, at which time the war was of primary concern.

Whereas, this Synod is fully aware of the great necessity of doing something to supply our own soldiers in the Confederate Army with the preaching of the Gospel by our ministers,

Resolved 1. That we establish an Army Mission in the following manner: Let as many ministers in connection with this Synod as will subscribe this resolution, be obligated to perform missionary labors in the Confederate Army, for the period of one month in each year, if our funds and the situation of the army will permit.

Resolved 2. That two ministers go at the same time, and that in rotation, being chosen by lot at each annual meeting of Synod.

Resolved 3. That their expenses, at least, be defrayed by donations obtained from the congregations by solicitation.

Resolved 4. That those ministers, having performed such missionary visits as herein required, shall make a return of their traveling expenses to a treasurer hereinafter provided, who shall pay said expenses out of the funds he may have in hands for said purpose.

Resolved 5. That a treasurer be appointed whose duty it shall be to receive such money as may be collected for the purpose herein stated.

Resolved 6. That it be the duty of the ministers, associated with this enterprise, to take up collections in their several congregations, semi-annually; and that they forward said collections to the treasurer.

Henkel was then appointed corresponding secretary between the ministers and the army, and was to coordinate the mission endeavors. Moses Harmon, Esq., of Newton, was appointed treasurer.⁵⁸

Henkel and Smith began the year 1864 with yet another trip to the battle-front. On January 16, their work started at Lee's Army and proceeded to the 2nd Virginia Regiment, the North Carolina 32nd Regiment (including Catawba County Companies E and F) on the 22nd, the 33rd Virginia Regiment on the 24th, the 12th North Carolina Regiment ("Catawba Rifles") on the 25th, the 48th and 46th North Carolina Regiment on the 26th, the 28th North Carolina Regiment ("South Fork Farmers") on the 28th, and then to 38th ("Catawba Wildcats") North Carolina Regiment on the 29th. They had come home on the 30th, and Henkel missed his first February service at Miller's Church due to illness; however, he was at St. John's on the third Sunday in February, and Smith appeared at St. Peter's on the same date. Henkel conducted about six regular services during 1864, and five funerals. He also confirmed Dolphus Cline, who was about to go into the service, on April 4, 1864.⁵⁹

During the Civil War, the people turned to their God. At St. John's, special Thanksgiving services were held twice per year, and "fast days" were observed on occasion. Those to the north were experiencing the same emotion, as in response to the pleas of certain pastors, the motto "In God We Trust" first appeared on the nation's coinage, which was by then controlled by the Yankees.⁶⁰

Economic conditions in the south plunged to a deplorable low, as the fields lay fallow due to the loss of manpower consumed by the war effort. As the war progressed, the national currency and coinage was replaced by confederate currency, which by 1864 had lost its value, and by the end of the war, was rendered worthless. Consequently, the South found itself without a real currency of any kind, and often reverted to the barter system of generations past. The church members often remunerated their pastors with "in kind" gifts rather than money, as Pastor Smith received payment in bushels of wheat from members of his congregations.⁶¹ An example of the area economy is evident at the neighboring Friendship congregation in Alexander County, which was served by Timothy Moser during most of the war. In 1862, his yearly salary was pledged at \$74.75. The following year, the subscription amounted to \$74.00 and some corn. By 1864, Moser was pledged a whopping \$341.66-2/3, 8-1/2 bushels of corn, and two bushels of wheat.⁶² This apparent increase in salary was in reality a reduction, due to the runaway inflation and worthlessness of confederate currency.

In 1864, it was General Ulysses S. Grant's intention to occupy the Confederate capital of Richmond. Lee's army resisted these advances fiercely at the "Battle of the Wilderness" west of Chancellorsville, the battle of

58. Henkel, pp. 160-161.

59. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1864. J. M. Smith Diary, 1864.

60. P. C. Henkel Diary, 1861-1865. J. M. Smith Diary, 1861-1865. Carothers, pp. 212-213.

61. Carothers, p. 213. J. M. Smith Diary, 1863, where wheat was received from members of St. Peter's, Sharon, and St. Martin's.

62. Crouse, *Friendship Sketch*, pp. 19-20, repr. p. 12.

Spottsylvania Court House, and the battle of Cold Harbor. Grant then moved towards Petersburg, which was the southern railroad supply line to Richmond. Both sides dug in, and the siege lasted for about nine months, incurring many casualties. At Spottsylvania, several St. John's soldiers were captured, and most were imprisoned at Point Lookout, Maryland. Many were later removed to the prison at Elmira, New York. The health conditions in the prisons and hospitals on both sides of the firing line were deplorable, particularly when complicated by wounds and injuries. During 1864, St. John's lost Martin Sigman to chronic diarrhea in Elmira; Elcanah Yount to "debilitis" in Charlottesville hospital; Sydney H. Rowe to pneumonia in Elmira; Jonas Hunsucker in Point Lookout prison; and Daniel Traffelstadt to "colitis" in Petersburg Hospital. Particularly tragic were the cases of Yount and Traffelstadt, who each were survived by a widow and six children.

As the war neared its conclusion, Henkel related the following observations:

. . . but my conclusion from the outset was that we would have many dark and cloudy times. I never did believe that it would be only a breakfast spell and then end. . . . We cannot think of subjugation without honor. Desparate, desparate indeed will the Southern people be if we are subjugated, but probably not more so than we deserve, this cannot be denied, for the wickedness of the Southern people is very great; but the people of the North are at least, equally wicked in the same degree as a people. But in a national point of view, they have outraged everything that is honorable and just. And will not a righteous God punish them too. True, they have suffered seriously as well as we. . . .63

The month of April 1865 was a time of local strife, and church services were discontinued "on acct. the times --The invasion by Gen. Stoneman, and surrendur of the Confed. Army."64 The following personal account of this period has been preserved by a St. John's member, whose father and grandfather lived at the foot of the Church hill. The grandfather's family was a personal victim of the dreadful plundering associated with this war:

The South was then going through the dire results of a dreadfully destructive war. In 1865 a part of Johnson's [*sic*, Johnston] army of invasion set up camp only about a quarter of a mile from my Grandfather's [and Father's] home. At noon, in walked two generals and ordered my Grandmother to prepare them a meal, which she did, of course, although the soldiers in this camp left for her little with which to prepare a meal for them, or anybody else. They went to the granary and hauled the corn away. They took the chickens out of the yard. To save the meat, a box was put into a hole dug in a hillside and then covered with dirt and leaves. The horses were put in the care of a faithful negro slave in the deep pine forest. But the "Yankies" finally found them -- and took them.65

His father, who was blessed to live through World War II, well remembered the events.

The Union soldiers had possessed the Smith horses after the surrender of General Lee, and before the news had reached this section of the Catawba. With General Grant's order that all property confiscated after the surrender be returned to the owner, the young Elmore followed his father and others who sought the return of their horses, in to the Johnston camp. Wearing a much prized hat, the little boy was heart-broken when one of the Union guards grabbed the hat and pretended to keep the headgear. After teasing the child for a time, the hat was also returned and it was a happy boy that strode across the road home with the horses and the hat.66

The exact location of the union camp is fairly straightforward. If the young boy only had to cross the road to get home (which still proudly exists at time of this writing), the extensive plains along Lyle's Creek about one half mile west of St. John's was the camp's location. It was near the intersection of both Oxford Ford and Island Ford Roads, the two primary routes across the Catawba River.

Pastor Henkel, also living nearby, recounted this encampment with a much better outcome, but also related the immediate aftermath of the surrender:

63. Letter from P. C. Henkel to Socrates Henkel, dated Feb. 22, 1865, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

64. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1865.

65. *Smith Autobiography*, no page numbers.

66. Newspaper clipping from Mrs. Ruth McCuiston, dated April 29, ?. RCC: I did not locate this clipping.

... when the Yankeys were camped around my house. I lost nothing only my corn and oats was fed up by them, and we had to board them pretty heavily. Besides they burned up about 100 rails, and tore down some 200 panels of fence, and broke down the most of the palings of one side of our garden; otherwise they did not damage as much by their raid.

Well the darkeys are turned loose on us, and they do not a little stealing . . . They are mooving [sic] to and fro -- having nearly all left their old homes. Their freedom does them more harm than good.⁶⁷

It seems appropriate in a church history to attempt to account for the fallen soldiers of the congregation. Catawba County sent many men into this war effort, and Cline's Township sent seventy-two percent of its able bodied men of proper age into service for the Confederacy. The St. John's congregations certainly did no small part. The following list of names is derived from the funerals performed by P. C. Henkel and J. M. Smith during this era, plus information preserved by surviving cemetery markers. These were compared to the lists of names in Hahn's, "Catawba Soldiers of the Civil War." There are no aspirations that this list approaches completeness, as the funeral listings from Tennessee Synod Re-Organized Pastor Adam Miller, Jr. and the German Reformed Pastor could not be located for complement; however, the extensive list should offer ample insight into the wide-spread and cruel devastation to families during the dark days of the War Between the States.

Alfred Barringer (- 1862) (PCH funeral, no marker) If A. M. Barringer, he enlisted April 27, 1861, Company A, 12th Regiment, Catawba Rifles, killed July 1, 1862; CS pp. 89-130.

James Brown (- 1863) (PCH funeral, no marker)

Labon Cline (- 1862) (JMS funeral, no marker)

Robert A. Crawford (1835-1864) (cemetery)

Cromwell Deal (- 1862) (PCH funeral)

Wm. L. Herman (1836-1864) (cemetery)

Jonas Hunsucker (1826-1864) (cemetery) Enlisted March 31, 1863 into Company E, 32nd Regiment, NC Troops, CS pp. 196-198.

Martin G. Hunsucker (1839-1864) (PCH funeral, Nov. 1864, cemetery)

James G. Hunsucker (1844-1862) (cemetery) Enlisted December 1, 1861, Company F, 32nd Regiment, NC Troops, died November 12, 1862; CS pp. 196-228.

Abel Isenhower (1823-1863) (cemetery, died from disease contracted in the War.)

Bartlet Isenhower (1841-1862) (cemetery, PCH funeral)

Patrick A. Isenhower (1843-1865) (cemetery, PCH funeral, April 27)

David Pope (18??-1863) (PCH funeral) Company I, 49th Regiment, NC Troops, got sick and died during war; CS pp. 285-310.

Logan Pope (- 1865) (PCH funeral, Apr. 27)

Major D. P. Rowe (1836-1863) (cemetery)

S. H. Rowe (1838-1864) (cemetery)

Benjamin Sigmon (- 1865) (PCH funeral, 3rd Sun. Jan)

Gilbert Sigmon (1835-1862) (cemetery) If G. P. Sigmon: Enlisted June 6, 1861, Company F, 23rd Regiment, NC Troops, died December 4, 1861 in VA; CS pp. 131-165.

David Sigmon (1812-1862) (PCH funeral)

Martin Sigmon (- 1865) (PCH funeral, 3rd Sun. June)

Franklin Sipe (1820-1863) (cemetery)

Augustus Smith (- 1865) (PCH funeral, 3rd Sun. Mar.)

Daniel Stine (1846-1864) (cemetery)

Daniel Traffenstrat (????-????) (PCH funeral, 1863) Enlisted, Company I, 49th Regiment, NC Troops, died in hospital in Petersburg, VA; CS pp. 285-310.

D. Treffelstadt (- 1865) (PCH funeral, 3rd Sun. Jun) A Daniel Traffenstedt enlisted 28 Jan 1864, Company K, 49th Regiment; died in hospital at Petersburg 22 Sept 1864

Noah Treffelstadt (PC funeral) Company I, 49th Regiment, NC Troops, wounded at Malvern Hill, and died from wounds; CS pp. 285-310. (no cemetery marker)

D. C. Yount (- 1864) (PCH funeral, Sept. 27, no marker)

67. Letter from P. C. Henkel to Ambrose Henkel, December 1865, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

Elcanah Yount (1825-1864) (PCH funeral, Sept. 27, cemetery) Enl. 27 April 1861, Company A, 12th Regiment, Catawba Rifles, died 1863; CS pp. 89-130

Lt. Miles A. Yount (1833-1866) (cemetery) 1st Lieutenant, Company A, 12th Regiment, Catawba Rifles; CS pp. 89-130

Patrick A. Yount (1843-1863) (cemetery) 3rd Sargent, Company E, 57th Regiment, NC Troops, died ?????; CS pp. 314—68

Any doubt that the community reeled in the wake of the Civil War should be dispelled by the list of names above. Of those that returned, many brought with them the wounds, injuries, loss of limbs, etc., that became life-long reminders of these four years.

The *History of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod* offers a stirring account of this period in Lutheran history in the South:

During this decade, there were many difficulties to encounter, obstacles to surmount, and disasters to overcome. The Civil War, of four years, between the States, North and South, which commenced in April 1861, and continued till April, 1865, exerted a very depressing, disastrous, and demoralizing influence, not only over the country generally, but also over the Church. In the South, a large majority of the able-bodied men were in the army. Ministers were sometimes arrested, and others "refugeed," as the term went, when the Northern army invaded the country. Anxiety prevailed. Residences, mills, saw-mills, barns, &c., were burned by the hundreds. Horses, cattle, and other stock and property were driven up North by parties who followed the armies for the purpose of plunder. Churches were frequently occupied for weeks and months as hospitals and rendezvous. The whole labor system was subverted and demoralized. The currency was vitiated and rendered worthless. Millions of slaves, that had been regarded as property, were set free, and required immediate care and attention, not having been trained during their state of slavery to provide for themselves.

For five years, the ministers in Virginia and Missouri, belonging to the Tennessee Synod, were prevented from meeting in the synodical conventions with their brethren in North and South Carolina. But notwithstanding this condition of things, there never was a truer and more faithful set of men. They worked in season and out of season. They attended as faithfully as possible to the spiritual wants of their people; they advised, encouraged, and cheered the wives and children whose husbands and sons and brothers had entered the army, often performing manual labor. Nor were the people generally less faithful. Strong faith prevailed. The exclamation was, Christ will take care of His Church, and God will provide for His people, and ultimately overrule all things for the best. It is almost miraculous how the people passed through the war as well as they did, and how soon they emerged from its ruins and devastations, both as to spiritual and temporal matters. Surely no one who knows anything about the conditions of things in the South, during the war and a few years after its close, can doubt the intervention of the hand of Providence. The lessons of faith, hope, and charity were learned. The people learned to depend on God, rather than on themselves. It is easy to talk about faith when peace, plenty, and prosperity prevail, but it is quite different when all these are removed.⁶⁹

Two of the most devoted pastors during the war were the Tennessee Synod "sons of St. John's." The travels of Henkel and Smith, the chances they took, and the perils they faced during the war, can never be understood in the modern society. Their sole purpose was the furtherance of the Lord's work, and **not one word** can be found in any Church history that these men were ever recognized or honored for their dedication.

Upon completion of the terrible war, reconstruction faced the Catawba Valley. It took several years until the families regained their personal and family well-being. Some local churches had met as regularly as possible, but many were rent asunder. The St. Peter's and Sharon congregations had become so scattered and disorganized that they were forced to start over, with a completely new listing of current members.⁷⁰ Somehow, Henkel, Smith, and the St. John's congregation were able to maintain a somewhat normal schedule during 1865 as Henkel was present for ten regular services, and he and Smith recorded thirteen funerals. The Lord's Supper was resumed on a regular schedule during this year.⁷¹

⁶⁸ RCC: Mark has some question marks in this data yet did an excellent job noting the soldiers. His sources and citations are: St. John's Cemetery as cemetery; P. C. Henkel Diary as PCH funeral; Haun's "Catawba Soldier" as CS with the pages noted; John M. Smith Journal as JMS funeral.

⁶⁹ Henkel, p. 184-185. It should be duly noted that Socrates Henkel was P. C. Henkel's brother, and would have been privileged to have unusual insight into this period through his association with the Henkel Press.

⁷⁰ *St. Peter's Church Records*, transcr. *Sharon Church Records*, transcr.

⁷¹ *P. C. Henkel Diary*, 1865. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1865.

It is during this same period that the first records exist from within St. John's congregation. Whether St. John's was pressed to re-organize is not proven, but a new register of members was documented just after the end of the war. When a new book was purchased, the membership list appears in P. C. Henkel's own handwriting: 72

**The Following Contains a list of members
belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Church at St.
John's Signed their names Oct 15th 1865 & transfered
on this Book Oct the 4th 1868**

Names of Males.
Pastor P C Henkel
Church Council

Members

Frederick Smith
Eli E. Deal
Logan Dellinger
Silas Wike
G. H. Moser
M. L. Hoke
D. M. Sigman
Laban Fox
David Fox
Franklin Simmons
Sephias Simmons
David Smith
J. P. Baker
F. A. Yount
S. Yount
John G. Shell
J. A. Yount
J. P. Cline
G. D. L. Yount
H. G. Icenhower
Lewis Hefner
John A. Hoke
Tobias Moser
P. C. Hoke
M. A. Abernathy
David R. Hoke
Michael Cloninger
Elijah Cline
Elias Longrier
F. Hoke
J. G. Sigman
D. W. Cline
Wm J Sigman
L. A. Deal

72. Church Book I, St. John's Lutheran Church, hereinafter referenced *CBI*. New Church Registers at St. John's, St. Peter's, and Sharon were all begun immediately after the war. Some churches, such as St. Peter's and possibly Friendship, were pressed to re-organize entirely at the end of the war. Union soldiers destroyed many public records in Burke and Alexander County Court Houses, and the absence of earlier Church Records in all congregations in northern Catawba County suggests Stoneman's Raiders may have included congregational records in their unnecessary mischief.

A. Deal
 G. A. Hoke
 Wm. J. Carpenter
 C. T. Brown
 C. T. Sigman
 John N. Dellinger
 Henry Reitzel
 D. F. Carpenter
 Knox Smith
 Elmore Smith
 John Yount
 Calvin Fox
 Miles Deal
 Reuben Deal
 Julius Wike
 A. L. Yount
 F. Dellinger
 Elbert Miller
 David Ingold
 John Jarrett
 P. Jarrett
 A. Sigman
 Jonas Hunsucker
 M. Cline
 J. J. Cline
 Eli Bowman
 Noah Yount
 Names of females

E. Yount
 Frank Bolick ???
 E. A. Deal
 F. Deal
 Diannah Dellinger
 E. A. Sigman
 L. B. Sigman
 Flora Fox
 Carolina Hoyle
 Ann Simmons
 Menorva Simmons
 Sally Baker
 Emaline Baker
 Jemimah Yount
 O. H. Yount
 Sophrona Yount
 Sally Sigman
 Betty Shell
 F. N. Benick
 F. E. Herman
 C. E. Dellinger
 Rosan Heffner
 Harriet Hoke
 Lovina Moser
 Dianna Yount
 Martha J. Abernathy

Susan C. Hoke
Lucinda Frazier
Rosan Cloninger
Harriet Hoke
F. R. Hoke
A. M. Hoke
E. Cline
Mary Moser
Lidy Longrier
Catharine Hoke
Malinda Haffer
Harriett Sigman
Adolin Cline
Rany Deal
Catharine Fox
Deliah Sigman
C. E. Yount
S. B. Deal
S. Cline
Sally Hoke
C. Carpenter
Carolina Carpenter
C. Goble
Candace E. Moser
Allis Whitener
Mary Cloninger
Martha Cloninger
C. J. Sigman
Candace Cline
Elenora Miller
Susan Jarrett
Sarian Simmon
Ellen Smith
Wm Shook
Betty Shook
Wm Traverce
E Traverce
C. Traverce

Only one hundred thirty-five names seems like a very small number for the once-large congregation. As the only newer congregations that would have drawn a great number of persons from St. John's were St. Peter's, St. Stephen's, Miller's, Piney Grove, and the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized congregation in its midst, it seems that many families had migrated elsewhere. Surprisingly, the ratio of men to women is about equal, even after the death and destruction of the war. Later lists, as the congregation and its families regrouped, tell a fuller story of the true situation.

Soon, the men of the cloth were back to the normal routine of exposing false teachers in their midst. P. C. Henkel had become highly respected for his debating skills on subjects of doctrine. As early as 1847 and 1848, he held a four day confrontation with Baptist Pastor William Garner on the subject of baptism. One partial observer remembered this as "mostly a one-sided discussion; that Garner was no match for Henkel."⁷³ In December of 1851, he met the "Wandering Pilgrim," a Baptist Preacher in Lincolnnton. This engagement on the same subject

73. Crouse, *Friendship Sketch*, p. 42, repr. p. 25. *P. C. Henkel Diary - 1847-1848*.

consumed another four days.⁷⁴ Not one to back down from a challenge, in November 1865, P. C. Henkel relates the following somewhat humorous accounts about debates between himself and pastors of other denominations:

The Rev. R. H. Moody in Burk [sic] Co. (said to be the champion of western N. C.) challenged the world to meet him in discussion on the mode and proper subjects of Baptism. Dr. I. G. Peterson of that Co. excepted [sic] the challenge, by suggesting my name. So we met the 9th Nov. at the Mountain Grove Church (Methodist Church) 6-1/2 miles from the Table Rock Burk Co. right among the bush whackers. I held him to the rack three days; and the people called him the worst whipped man they ever so [sic, "saw"]. We had a fine time of it. Quite an orderly debate; and we made a very good impression. A church could be readily organized there; but it is almost too far for me to attend them. . . . Scores of persons told me I opened up altogether a new way to them and expressed a desire to attach themselves to our church.

I expect to have to meet the Rev. Dr. Bulwer of Va., a Campbellite preacher, at Poff Town in Forsyth Co. N. C. in discussion on the mode and subjects of baptism. Bro. I. Condon takes him up and proposes me as the Drs. opponent. If he does not back down, this discussion will come off some time in Feb. . . . He, probably has a "sheep skin." I do not know whether Moody had or not, he made big pretensions. But I do not care for their "sheep skins," they will have to meet with the Porcupine any how. If the Dr. whips me it will be the first time. But as the fellow said - "it can't be did."⁷⁵

Such was P. C. Henkel's self-confidence, and his Lutheran peers revered him likewise. He was considered a doctrinally sound Pastor of the Lutheran beliefs, and was their champion debater on many occasions.

After commencement of the War between the States, the racial statistics of the Tennessee Synod are not reliable, as parochial reports were not regularly submitted, because pastors were restricted in their ability to travel. For instance, the number of infant baptisms reported for 1861 were about one-half the yearly average of the preceding two decades. Baptizing of slaves had continued with 18 in 1861, 8 in 1862, and 14 in 1863. The report of 1864 suggests that the outcome of the War had become apparent, as the label was changed from "slaves" to "colored." A year later, and upon Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, the term became "freemen."

The scars of the Civil War served to instill racial segregation and animosity not previously seen. The following chilling language of the 1866 Tennessee Synod minutes clearly illustrates the drastic social change brought about in the local Lutheran Church by the war:

Whereas, The colored people among us no longer sustain the same relation to the white man they did formerly, and that change has transferred the individual obligations and responsibility of owners to the whole Church; and,

Whereas, Some of them were formerly members of our congregations and still claim membership in them, but owing to the plainly marked distinctions which God has made between us and them, giving different colors, &c., it is felt by us, and them also, that there ought to be separate places of worship, and, also, separate ecclesiastical organizations, so that every one could worship God with the least possible embarrassment; and

Whereas, These colored people are considered firm adherents to our Church, and we feel it our imperative duty to assist them in adopting such measures as will meet best the necessities of their present condition; be it, therefore,

Resolved 1. That whenever any of our colored brethren desire to preach, they may make application to some one of the ministers of our Synod, who shall inform the President, when it shall be the President's duty to appoint two ordained ministers who, in connection with two laymen whom they may choose, shall constitute a committee to examine the candidate upon his motives and mental and moral qualification, and, if they are satisfied, to license him to preach, catechize, baptize, and celebrate the rites of matrimony among those of his own race, according to the usages of our Church, until the next regular session of Synod thereafter, when said committee shall report. This license, however, does not authorize them to preach in our churches, or take part in our ecclesiastical meetings; nevertheless they are permitted to worship with us as heretofore, yet we advise them to erect houses for themselves in which they may worship.

Resolved 2. That we will use every reasonable means to aid them in organizing and building up congregations.⁷⁶

74. P. C. Henkel Journal - 1851.

75. Letter from P. C. Henkel to Ambrose Henkel, December 1865, Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. The "Campbellites" were actually named "Disciples of Christ." The denomination was founded by Alexander Campbell, his father, and others in the early 1800's.

The Campbells had formerly been Presbyterian seceders, who believed in the revival methods of conversion and baptismal immersion. In most ways, they believed similarly to many Baptists.

76. Henkel, pp. 168-170. Most of the churches in the Tennessee Synod were in the Catawba Valley, the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, and in the
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Sociological historians are certainly more qualified to examine the motives and results of this resolution. However, its impact on the Tennessee Synod congregation at St. John's appears negligible for many years, although earlier confirmation, communion, and baptism lists are unknown to exist. St. John's largely ignored this advice. During the post-war period, some freedmen stayed in their own houses on the farms of their former masters. They continued to have their children baptized, partook Holy Communion, and sat in the gallery at regular worship services, as had been their custom since the church building was constructed. But St. John's may have been an isolated example of this practice.

The accepted social structure had been upset, and the larger Church was affected likewise. From the years 1866 through 1870, the Tennessee Synod did not report in its Minutes the baptism of a single "colored" or "freedman." Further years no longer indicate the term "freedman." Based on St. John's records, which include those of "colored" members, the baptisms and confirmations of white and black were grouped in Synod Minutes without racial distinction.⁷⁷

For the first time, in 1865, a newly-freed slave applied to the Tennessee Synod for a license to preach the Gospel under auspices of the Lutheran Church.⁷⁸ This may have been the stimulus that resulted in the resolution above, or the stimulus may have been on the part of the men of the Tennessee Synod to find suitable persons who were competent enough in their knowledge and beliefs to work in the new society of freedmen. After all, the freedmen were no longer required to attend the church of their masters. They had the complete freedom to attend other churches, to organize their own churches, to avoid religion entirely, or, in the case of St. John's, to continue their membership as before. Yet, they had little means to construct their own churches.

The first pastoral applicant's name was Thomas Fry, a 74-year-old communicant member of St. John's, as he and his wife, Polly, regularly took their seats in the balcony after the Civil War.⁷⁹ Prior to this time, it was customary that slaves could only commune in the churches of their masters. No new Negro transfers were documented in the post-Civil War records, but children of current members were certainly admitted. Thomas Fry may very well be the first negro in the United States of America to apply for the Lutheran ministry after the Civil War.⁸⁰

The 1870 Census of Catawba County reveals that Thomas and Polly Fry lived in Clines Township, near several St. John's members. There can be little chance for mistake that this is the same Thomas Fry who applied for the ministry, as during the Civil War years, nearly all participating churches in the Tennessee Synod were located in North Carolina. The 1870 census lists only one Negro by that name in the entire State of North Carolina.⁸¹

At this point, provable information on Fry gives way to oral tradition:

Fry was born on George Washington's plantation at Mt. Vernon and later taken to North Carolina. There, he is reported to have studied the Lutheran Confessions while tending his master's whiskey still. . . . Some say he had a ministry in both Lincoln and Catawba counties and that he organized St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Catawba County. Other reports indicate that Fry lived less than a year after he was first licensed.⁸²

Lexington County area of South Carolina. All of these areas appear to have suffered many of the same consequences of war.

77. See following confirmation list for a confirmed freedman.

78. *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.

79. *Ibid.* CBI. "T. Fry," "Thomas Fry," and "Polly Fry" are on St. John's Communion lists in the 1870's. Lists from the 1860's do not identify names of slaves/freedmen.

80. Jeff G. Johnson, *Black Christians, The Untold Lutheran Story*, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1991), p. 142. Nowhere does this book list an earlier black applicant, nor do other Synod histories. It is admitted, that this author did not search throughout the Country for proof of this statement; yet he did look through many, many, histories in various college libraries and repositories. It seems quite unlikely that a Synod historian would overlook such an item, unless some synods did not differentiate between skin color in their Minutes.

81. 1870 Census lists Thomas and Polly Fry in Clines Township, near Lawson Sigman, Daniel Little, Sen., Noah Sipe, John Houston, Jesse Gantt, Allen Hoke, Thomas Cloninger, W. H. Morrow, and Philip Baker.

82. Johnson, cited above. While not being able to refute or confirm Fry's birthplace, certain facts to the contrary are evident. St. Peter's was founded between 1816 and 1823, and would not have been founded by a slave! It cannot be determined that Fry was literate; therefore, he may not have been able "to have studied the Lutheran Confessions" anywhere, especially not at his master's whiskey still. Fry was not dead in 1866, as the St.

Upon the end of the Civil War, the freedmen were required to publicly list their spouses and date of cohabitation on a "Freedman's Marriage Record." Locally, these were compiled by the year 1866, and Thomas listed his date of "marriage" to Polly as 1816.⁸³ This early date was long before the legal system recognized or licensed slave marriages; therefore, Thomas and Polly may have been married by a pastor or in a church. If they were in the local area (as their surname suggests) by that time, they were likely married by either David Henkel or Daniel Moser.⁸⁴

The Synod President, in compliance with the above resolution and Fry's application, appointed the two nearest pastors, P. C. Henkel and J. M. Smith, to the examination committee for Thomas Fry. If Fry were found qualified, they were authorized to license him. Upon examination, the committee "found that he could not read and write, and was not otherwise qualified." His inability to read and write could either be due to lack of education or the blindness which afflicted him prior to the year 1870. Yet he is reported to have administered to his people for most of his life.⁸⁵

Further information on Fry's ministerial service has proven elusive; however, the Catawba County legal system recognized him as a Pastor. On September 12, 1867, Thomas Fry is listed on a marriage bond as performing the marriage of David Yount and Mahala Travelstret. The black man, David Yount, lived within about one-half mile of St. John's. Whether this ceremony was performed at the church is unknown. Whether Fry ever preached at St. John's, or assisted Henkel and Smith, is also not known.⁸⁶

On the fifth Sunday of May, 1881, J. M. Smith delivered a funeral sermon for a "colored woman" by the name of Polly Fry, from the text of Romans 10:9.⁸⁷ The Thomas Fry story is now left for others to ponder.

Little information exists for the years 1866 and 1867, as Henkel's Diary and the Church Records seem somewhat incomplete. He lists services about once per two months, but there was probably a more regular appearance. Henkel also visited "the New church near Daniel Roseman's" in August of 1867, suggesting several possibilities. There might have been some unrest and dissension in the congregation. But there is another possibility. Since Roseman had been a fairly large slave owner and racial relations were not the same, there may have been a new church built for use by the freedmen. Occasional services were held there in later years, and it would not be surprising to discover that Thomas Fry was preaching somewhere near his home. J. M. Smith listed four St. John's funerals at St. John's during this period.⁸⁸

The subject of race relations was silent in the Synodical Minutes for fifteen years, and the resolutions of 1866 had not proved successful in the advancement of the faith among the Freedmen. The Tennessee Synod pastors resolved to take a greater interest in this group of souls, and were encouraged to "make all efforts in their power to educate religiously the colored people, by preaching, lecturing, and catechisation, with a view sooner or later of getting men of their own color to look after the spiritual interests of their race in connection with the

John's Church Book, the 1870 Census, and other civil documentation prove. That this quote was included only proves the difficulty with using oral tradition in current history. *Life Sketches*, p. 237, also states that Fry organized "St. Peter." It would not surprise this author whatsoever, that St. Peter's might have helped to organize a separate congregation for the former slaves in accordance with the Synod's resolution.

83. "Freedman's Marriage Record 1866," *Catawba Cousins*, (Dec. 1986), p. 93.

84. The David Henkel Diary does not list this marriage; therefore, it might have been Moser, another pastor, or not at all. Henkel and Moser nearly always led the Tennessee Synod in statistics regarding slaves.

85. The 1870 Census listed Fry as blind. Henkel, pp. 169-170. *Life Sketches*, p. 237.

86. The 1870 Census lists David Yount as 26 years old, in Cline's Township, and living near Frederick Smith, Obed Rocket, Evan Gantt, Daniel Roseman, Henry J. Reitzel, Jonas Cline, Daniel Deal, Daniel Little, and Franklin Deal.

87. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1881. J. M. Smith did not deliver over five or six sermons to a location called Bethlehem during his long career, so this must have been a special request. Readers are encouraged to read the Bible passage. Through the *Research of Gwendolyn Bost Sherrill*, Conover, it seems possible that Thomas and Polly had been the slaves of Daniel Fry. Daniel married the daughter, also named Polly, of former St. John's Elder, John Smith, indicating that they could have been his former slaves, and inherited by his daughter. If proven, this more firmly presents a connection between St. John's and Thomas and Polly Fry, plus the early nineteenth century direction from a master who was motivated towards St. John's Lutheran Church. The Daniel Fry family moved to Alexander County, in the area of Bethlehem. Through this same connection, J. M. Smith was John Smith's grandson, and Pastor Smith might have known Polly Fry from his infancy.

88. P. C. Henkel *Diary*, 1866-1867. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1866-1867. The location of "the Church near Daniel Roseman's" must have been very near St. John's, as the 1860 and 1870 census lists Roseman near the Hunsuckers, Sigmans, Hokes, etc.. It is definitely named as a "CHURCH"!

Lutheran Church."89 As noble as this appears, its success was not flush with promise. If a Negro pastor was ever received into the Tennessee Synod during the nineteenth century, his race was not found by this author in the Minutes.

The Tennessee Synod meeting of 1867 was much more positive, as it was resolved that all ministers be encouraged to set up Sunday schools in all their congregations, in order to offer proper religious education to children.90 It took several years before this was accomplished at St. John's.

As in previous years, feelers were being sent out and received about merging of several of the Lutheran Synods. Pastor Smith was appointed as a delegate to the next meeting of the North Carolina Synod.91 On the home front, the year 1868 resulted in ten visits from Henkel, two communion services, and a confirmation class of 29. Henkel and Smith performed graveside services on a single occasion each.92

The *Church Book* lists the names of these confirmands:93

**A List of Catechumens Confirmed.
Sacrament adm. 3rd Sunday in May 1868**

Knox Smith
Jonas Hunsucker
John Yount
Elmore Smith
Calvin Fox
David Ingold
Miles Deal
Reuben Deal
Marcus Cline
Jason Cline
Eli Bowman
John Jarrett
Pinckney Jarrett
Albert Miller
" Yount
Julius Wike
Franklin Dellinger
Adolphus Sigman
Cate J. Sigman
Allis Whitener
Mary Cloninger
Martha Cloninger
Candace Cline
Sarian Simmon
Elenora Miller
Susan Jarrett
Ellen Smith

Candace E. Moser

Colored [*sic*]

89. Henkel, p. 213.

90. *Ibid.*, p. 172.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

92. P. C. Henkel *Diary*, 1868. J. M. Smith *Diary*, 1868. Church Register I, St. Johns Lutheran Church.

93. *CBI*.

J. Smith

Twenty-nine scholars is quite respectable. Of particular interest is the last entry. Regardless of the new status of the "freedmen," many former slaves at St. John's stayed at the farms of their former masters, adopted the family's surname, and continued as members of the congregation. Later communion lists include several "colored" members, with up to thirteen in attendance at a given service. Regular attendance by "colored" is documented up through the 1890's, although the participants dwindled to just a few.⁹⁴

At the communion service of the same date, a list appears with the numbers of family members represented for each head of household:⁹⁵

**The following Contains a list of Com
municants at St. Johns Church 3rd Sunday
May 1868**

Logan Dellinger	2		
F. Smith	2		
E. E. Deal	3		
Silas Wike	2		
G. H. Moser	2		
Henry Rietzel	2		
Samuel Jarret	3		
D. W. Cline	2		
Calvin Brown	2		
M. L. Hoke	1		
D. F. Carpenter	1		
Laban Fox	4		
John S. Shell	1		
Franklin Shook	1		
D. R. Hoke	2		
F. A. Yount	2		
Dianna Yount	1		
Susan Sigman	1		
Darcus Sipe	1		
Elizabeth Little	1		
Mary Guttree	1		
Catharine Smith	1		
David Smith	4		
F. Hoke Sen	3		
Wm. Raby?	3		
Wm. J. Sigman	2		
Cate Maize	1		
Paul Hunsucker	2		
G. A. Hoke	2		
John Simmon	2		
A. Hafer	1		
T. Shook	2		
T. Moser	2	P. C. Hoke	2
Harriett Hoke	1		
M. Hoke	1		

⁹⁴. *Ibid.*

⁹⁵. *Ibid.*

F. Hoke Jun	2	
Ann Hunsucker	1	
Polly Hunsucker	1	
E. Cline	2	
L. A. Deal	3	
F. A. Brady	2	
A. P. Miller	1	
H. Bowman	4	
Z. S. Benic	2	
L. A. Deal	1	
J. P. Baker	2	
M. Cloninger	2	
W. J. Carpenter	3	
L. Smith	1	
Susan Icenhower	2	
J. P. Cline	2	
L. C. Fox	1	
C. Henkel	2	
N. Sigman	1	
A. Deal	2	
F. Simmons	4	
E. Longrier	2	
Martin Sigman	2	
J. S. Sigman	2	
Jacob Icenhower	3	
P. F. Smith	1	
B. Robison	1	
Jane Sigman	1	
W. W. Sigman	1	
Logan Setzer	1	
Cate Yount	1	
Sally Sipe	1	
Mary Miller	1	
M. Huffman	1	
M. S. Sigman	1	
Rhoda Sigman	1	Camila Rowe 1
Lucinda Frazier	1	
Jesse Gant	1	
Allen Barger	2	
Polly Brady	1	
D. Brinkly	2	

This list does not include the names of the confirmation class above, nor, as can be determined, does it include Negro members in attendance.

In 1869, Henkel preached six sermons at St. John's, plus a single funeral. During this year, he held a communion service on May 17th, whereby the family losses due to the Civil War become obvious. A total of 168 communed, with a listing of 63 males, 105 females, and 6 "colored." The devastation to the young men in the South and in the St. John's congregation is apparent from the male/female ratio.⁹⁶

In this year, Reverend P. C. Henkel received and accepted a Call to serve the Lutherans in Missouri, many of whom had migrated from this area. At his last communion service at St. John's, his participants totaled 153, 5 of

96. P. C. Henkel *Diary*, 1869. *Church Register I*.

which were "colored." This marked the end of a significant period of Henkel family influence, 1803-1869. The name P. C. Henkel would long be remembered in the area; but the Lutherans of St. John's had not heard the last from P. C. Henkel.⁹⁷

The Tennessee Lutheran congregations found themselves with a critical shortage of Pastors, and a tremendous load fell on the shoulders of J. M. Smith. His tireless efforts deserve proper recognition. In the year 1870, Pastor Smith preached at St. John's, Friendship, Piney Grove, St. Stephen's, Zion, St. Paul's, St. James, St. Peter's, Old Hauss Church, St. Martin's, and Sharon. It is amazing that he could keep these eleven congregations assembled, much less attend to baptisms, marriages, and funerals. He preached a total of twenty sermons at St. John's, including four funerals. The communion services in May were assisted by Henry Goodman, and had 182 in attendance, including 65 males, 109 females, and 10 "coloreds." The November sacramental service had statistics of 165 total, 57, 100, and 6, respectively. Smith was paid over \$80.00 from the congregation for this year's service.⁹⁸

From the previous list of eleven Churches, Friendship, St. Martin's, and Sharon were on the other side of the Catawba River from St. John's, with the former being in Alexander and the latter two in Iredell Counties. The casual reader may assume that there were bridges across this waterway in the year 1870. This was certainly not the case. The trials of crossing the Great Catawba were related by a later Pastor (by the same surname) who visited some of these same churches on occasion.

The pastor lives in Catawba County, fourteen miles distant, at his largest congregation. This distance he must make by "private conveyance", twice a month, and must cross the Catawba River, about four hundred feet wide, on a rope ferry. Recently, the writer accompanied Pastor Smith to Taylorsville. Exactly one hour was consumed alone in crossing the river, with no little personal inconvenience and danger on account of high waters.⁹⁹

"Private conveyance" still included walking, horseback, horse and buggy, and/or personal payment for the ferry ride across the river. This significant obstacle, the Catawba River, was faced by all.

On one sad day in October of 1870, Smith's pastoral responsibilities were burdensome, as he preached the funeral sermon for Reverend Christian G. Reitzel, the only other readily available Tennessee Lutheran pastor of the area, but who had retired from the pulpit some years prior. Reitzel had faithfully served the congregations of St. Peter's, Miller's, and Zion from 1841 through 1849. Smith rendered the funeral service at St. Peter's on the 26th of that month.¹⁰⁰

Without his pastoral colleague, in 1871, Smith preached 128 sermons at the various churches, and included several private funerals, etc.. At St. John's, his totals were nineteen sermons, including communion attendance of 233 in May and 193 in September, and two funerals. Usually he was present on either the third Saturday or third Sunday of the month, either morning or afternoon. Often he'd preach at one church in the morning and a neighboring church later that day. Four sermons in a single weekend was not unusual, and quite often he'd repeat the same sermon as he moved from one congregation to another.¹⁰¹

The following year, he preached a total of 121 sermons, with twenty at St. John's. He added a new church to his repertoire of occasional services -- Fair Grove. The communion partakers totaled 208 in May and 193 in October.¹⁰²

In 1873, Smith's pace increased slightly but was usually at St. John's at least once per month for regular services. St. John's was host to a Pastors' Conference on the third Sunday in March, into which a communion

97. *Church Register I*.

98. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1870. *CBI*. Payment to the pastor does not include the "extras" for baptisms, funerals, marriages, etc.. If the other ten congregations paid one-half this amount, Smith was well-paid for his efforts as the South was still economically reeling from the War.

99. Paul Bischoff, in a column entitled "At Home," *The Lutheran Witness*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 13, (24 June 1909), p. 310, hereafter cited as *TLW*.

This story actually was written about Rev. C. O. Smith, but accurately describes the problems in crossing the river a few years earlier.

100. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1870.

101. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1871. *Church Register I*. The May communion was attended by 233 total, 89 males, 131 females, 13 coloreds. The September communion was attended by 193 total, 74 males, 109 females, 10 colored.

102. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1872. *Church Register I*. Again, the May communion statistics are 202 whites and 6 colored; the October numbers are 187 whites and 6 colored. The service at Fair Grove (Methodist) was a funeral.

service was incorporated, which included only 105 St. John's participants. Fall communion services improved to 161. Services were held on Christmas Day, which was somewhat unusual during this era, as there were not enough pastors to fill all pulpits in observance of this major Church festival.¹⁰³

The following year's schedule was similar, yet Smith found time to enter into a six-day series of debates with a Methodist, Daniel May, including the equivalent of two sermons per day. Smith felt this was "the truth against error." The results of these encounters are described more fully in the next Chapter. The highlight of 1874 was a confirmation class of 34, which received the sacred elements from Smith and Pastor Henry Goodman. The large attendance at the Lord's Supper included 90 males, 141 females, and 12 colored. The October communion weekend featured sermons from Pastor Jesse R. Peterson with 201 participants.¹⁰⁴

Pastor Goodman continued to provide occasional supply services at St. John's during 1875. In April, P. C. Henkel returned to the area for about one month, preached the three sermons on communion weekend, and administered the sacrament to 214 communicants. During this year, Smith began services for a new congregation at "Conova."¹⁰⁵

St. John's hosted another Pastors' "Free Conference" in July 1876,¹⁰⁶ but details of this event could not be located.

Smith's pace of over one hundred sermons per year continued, until the return of Rev. P. C. Henkel to the area in 1877, after which time, Henkel appeared at St. John's from time to time -- mostly for funerals and special occasions. Smith's regular congregations became St. John's, Piney Grove, St. Paul's, St. James, and Zion, while Henkel served St. Peter's, St. Stephen's, Friendship, Sharon, and St. Martin's. Smith also began preaching to a congregation at Killian's School-House, about four or five miles northeast of Hickory, and continued to occasionally visit the congregation at Conover.¹⁰⁷

Again, Pastor Goodman assisted with both the April and October communion services. The October service featured a sermon by the new teacher at Conover High School -- R. A. Yoder, who was studying theology under Henkel and Smith.¹⁰⁸

In 1879, there was a St. John's funeral that affected both Pastors Smith and Henkel, as Henkel was requested to preach the funeral addresses for Smith's own little daughter, Minnie. Smith recites this part of his family's history, from the third Sunday in June.

3rd Sun. appoint[ment] St. John's, did not meet it - for our sweet darling Minnie was a corpse that day, was buried on that same evening at St. John's. Rev. P. C. Henkel preached a consoling sermon on that sad occasion, from Mat. 21:16 -- O Minnie, sweet one, farewell!
JMS109

Unfortunately, Smith was pressed to return the condolences in September of that year, when he offered the text, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," for the funeral of P. C. Henkel's brother, Cicero.¹¹⁰

The subscription list for payment of the pastor had declined from the amount paid to Smith in 1870 to a total of about \$71.00, of which all but a couple of dollars was paid. In 1881, William Augustus Smith, Rev. Smith's son, but known as "Willie" to the congregation, read his first sermon at St. John's.¹¹¹

By this time, the college in Conover (later named Concordia) was founded and a few Pastor/Professors relocated to Conover. Smith was finally able to curtail his workload somewhat, as he resigned his charge at St. James to Rev. R. A. Yoder in 1879, and at Zion to Rev. Prof. J. S. Koerner on November 13, 1881, although he still performed occasional funerals at those churches. St. John's heard sermons from guest speakers, W. A. Smith and

103. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1873. *CBI*. The fall communion included 62 males, 92 females and 7 colored.

104. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1874. *CBI*.

105. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1875. These years are not present in P. C. Henkel's *Diary*. Conover was not yet an incorporated town. The "Canova" congregation later became Concordia. *CBI*.

106. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1876-1877.

107. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1877. *P. C. Henkel Diary*, 1877.

108. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1877.

109. *Ibid.*, 1879.

110. *Ibid.* Funeral text is from 1 Corinthians 15:26.

111. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1880-1881. *Church Register I*. W. A. Smith later became a professor at Roanoke College, a Lutheran Seminary.

Rev. M. L. Little.¹¹² In 1882, the congregation heard sermons from supply pastors Koiner, J. C. Moser, and Dr. M. L. Fox.¹¹³

On the third Sunday in January 1883, Smith performed an ordination service at St. John's, and N. E. Brady, T. N. Moser, and B. E. Smith were received into the Lord's service as Elders, to join N. E. Sigmon on that board.¹¹⁴

The early 1880's offered a major dilemma to the St. John's congregations. The trend of the Tennessee Synod through the latter half of the nineteenth century was away from the "Union" Church concept of worship as well as building usage. This movement began near the end of the Civil War in the General Lutheran Council, and became known as the "Galesburg Rule," by 1875, and is cited in Pastor Smith's text below.¹¹⁵ The opinion matured in 1879 in the Tennessee Synod, when the retiring president, P. C. Henkel, recommended the propriety of addressing what had been widely termed, "the Four Points," which were secret societies, pulpit fellowship, altar fellowship, and Chiliasm. Appointed to the committee to develop this position paper were Socrates Henkel, J. M. Smith, and A. Costner. The report, which became known as the "Summit Rule," strongly advised against these four trends of the religious society. Of particular interest to St. John's were the statements on "fellowship," that the ministers and people proceed with "all necessary precaution, prudence, and judiciousness in the exercise of such privileges, lest the sacredness of the altar and pulpit be violated, or the consciences of any be oppressed." In laymen's terms, the Tennessee Synod was against fellowship at the communion rail, in the chancel, or in the pulpit with other denominations, and even with non-Tennessee Synod Lutherans. The "Union Church" concept was clearly one of the targets of this message, and Pastor Smith was on the committee that developed these positions.¹¹⁶

During this era, Smith was one of the staunchest defenders of these principles, and his sincerity is unquestionable. When an area congregation admitted to conducting a "Union" Sunday School, it came under the public fire from some Lutheran pastors. One stated, "We have had a better opinion of said congregation; but we shall have to abandon said opinion until we are better informed." A second one questioned that any such school could possibly be "in good working order, with bright prospects." The Superintendent responded that Jesus said, "Feed my lambs, and we feel this to be our duty; though they be German Reformed, or Methodist, or other children." The debate raged back and forth for several months, and eventually wound up on the floor of the local Pastors' Conference, where J. M. Smith and R. A. Yoder were appointed to a committee on Sunday Schools. At the next conference, the question arose: "Is a Union Sunday school advisable under any circumstances?" J. M. Smith delivered an address in which he convinced all present that it was not advisable, "but dangerous." His answer "was a word that has but two letters, which are these: *NO!*" Years later, at a Tennessee Synod meeting, Smith's sentiments were endorsed.¹¹⁷

Once, when submitting a routine report of a confirmation at a neighboring church, Smith included the following statements:

Those who are of other denominations and attend our services are not at all insulted because they are not invited [to communion]. They do not expect to be, they do not wish to be. In this section the denominations have their communions, and their members can get all the communion they want right at home. Besides they are honest enough to not want to commune where they do not believe, and we are honest enough not to ask them to do so. Nobody is, therefore, insulted. But as soon as one not of us, takes it into his head to study the

112. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1881.

113. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1882. *J. C. Moser Diary #1*, 1882.

114. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1883.

115. Donald L. Huber, "The Galesburg Rule: Occasion for Theological Conflict and Clarification in Nineteenth Century American Lutheranism," *The Lutheran Historical Conference, Essays and Reports, 1978*, (Lutheran Historical Conference: 1979), pp. 84-93. Huber describes the "Galesburg Rule" controversy succinctly.

116. Henkel, pp. 209-210.

117. George M. Yoder, "Communion—Confirmation—Sunday School," *OCF* XIII:20, 21 May 1885. "An Enquirer," *OCF*, XIII:23, 11 June 1885. "Watchman," "Strange Things," *OCF*, XIII:24, 18 June 1885. Yoder, "A Reply to Enquirer and Watchman Combined," *OCF*, XIII:26, 2 July 1885. "Watchman," "Union Sunday School," *OCF*, XIII:27, 9 July 1885. Yoder, "Reply to Watchman," *OCF*, XIII:30, 30 July 1885. "Watchman," "Sunday School," *OCF*, XIII:33, 20 August 1885. Yoder, "The Sunday School Controversy," *OCF*, XIII:40, 8 October 1885. P. C. Wike, "Conference Proceedings," *OCF*, XIII:37, 17 September 1885. "Watchman," "Sunday School," *OCF*, XIII:43, 29 October 1885. "Meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XXI:39, 27 September 1893.

Word of God as revealed on the Holy Supper, and sees we have the right doctrine, and feels it his duty to enjoy church privileges with us, we confer with him, we hear him, we encourage him, and we will bring him to the communion . . . 118

When the local Pastors' Conference had a thesis prepared on pulpit and altar fellowship, J. M. Smith was naturally included on the review committee, and advised that it be published and distributed. 119

The "most magnificent building" was now over 80 years old, was not so magnificent, and was in dire need of replacement. At this time, facilities were still being shared by the three congregations. The larger congregation belonged to the Tennessee Synod, with the two smaller interests being the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized and the German Reformeds. The majority of the three congregations decided to jointly construct a new Union Church building. Pastor Smith and several members were opposed, and preferred to buy out the interests of the two smaller congregations. Nevertheless, W. N. Hunsucker, Logan Dellinger, and Emmanuel Sigman composed the original building committee of the joint congregations, and by February 24, 1883, had received bids for making the brick, and providing the masonry and carpentry work for a building of the dimension of 40 X 60 feet. 120

The new church was constructed from brick rather than logs. A Mr. Hunsucker, who was a brick mason, was overseer of the masonry work. A pit was dug on the Church property, and suitable clay was removed, mixed, poured into molds and baked in the sun. The work proceeded in spite of J. M. Smith's protests. 121

The corbelled brickwork on the exterior was very detailed, with pilasters at each corner and one at the center of the front facade. The gabled roof faced the road, and its pediment was defined by projecting brick coursed to cap the pilasters, and extending along the roof line. The eaves featured cornice returns. The front of the building contained two entrances with corbelled "eye-brow" arched heads. The height at the peak of the roof was approximately twenty-five feet above grade. Along each side wall were bays defined by brick pilasters, with arched windows centered in each bay. At the rear was a projecting apse, similar in shape to an over-size bay window, which served as the chancel area on the interior.

But the most prominent feature for miles around was the cupola, which was clad in painted wood siding. It extended to a height of approximately 35 to 40 feet above adjacent grade and several hundred feet above the surrounding valleys, to remain the most prominent structure north of Conover and south of the river.

The interior consisted of double aisles, separating three banks of pews, seating about three hundred people. The chancel was delineated by a large arch, opening into the five-sided apse. The building was heated by two wood stoves located along the side walls about half way between front and rear walls. At the chancel end of the nave, the choir sat on the left and faced the organ to the right.

Over the interior arch was emblazoned the motto:

BY THE GRACE OF GOD I AM WHAT I AM.

At the center of the chancel wall was a plaque, which read "Hitherto hath the LORD helped us!" A second interior plaque stated, "Be as Christ Was to me yesterday, today, and forever!" 122

The first services held in the new brick church were on October 20. Rev. M. J. Stirewalt visited the congregation to assist Pastor Smith, and a class of 18 was confirmed into the Tennessee Lutheran congregation. The sacrament of Holy Communion was then celebrated, with the new members participating. 123

The finance committee, consisting of G. H. Moser, B. E. Smith, and F. J. Dellinger presented their final report on January 14th, 1888. The total amount raised by the congregation was \$879.70, indicating that the total

118. J. M. Smith, "Confirmation," *OCF*, XVII:18, 1 May 1889. The Church was Bethel, Catawba County, NC.

119. L. L. Lohr, "Conference Meeting," *OCF*, XX:50, 14 December 1892.

120. "Church to be Built!" *The Newton Enterprise*, 17 February 1883.

121. Private conversations with Mrs. Lorene Hunsucker and Vance Hollar, April 10, 1994, by Mark Smith.

122. Interior and exterior descriptions are based on extant photographs. The two earliest photos were furnished by Mrs. Clare (Smith) Miller, and were once owned by Rev. C. O. Smith. The plaques may have been for the special occasion of the Centennial Celebration in 1899, and not permanent installations.

123. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1883. Gaither Yount, unpublished notes, state that the confirmation ceremony of his father was the first service in the new church.

cost from all three congregations was possibly in the range of \$1,700.00 to \$1,800.00. Logan Dellinger and others were thanked for their loyal service on the building committee.¹²⁴



St. John's Church erected in 1883
(Hut in the back)

But the year of 1883, which marked the advent of building construction, also is noted for continued dissension between those wanting a "Union" church and those preferring a strictly Tennessee Lutheran house. The Spring communion list contains the names of ninety-five families or individual communicants, with a total of 156 partakers. The fall list plunges to 51 families and 86 participants, which is convincing evidence of the deeply-rooted division within the ranks of the Tennessee Synod congregation.¹²⁵

Pastor Smith's dismay with the majority decision on building the new church is obvious from a rare lengthy citation from his diary:

3313rd Ser. St. John's 3rd Sun. Dec. '83 . . .

This closed my 13 years' service at St. John's. They commenced a union house. I opposed such a house. Lutherans were able at that place to build a house for themselves. Some were for this, others for the union house. A division was created. The union party went on, with two sects worshipping in the old house — the Adam Miller faction & the Reformed party, they get a new house.

The anti-union party would not co-operate with them -- withdrew from the congregation, leaving the Lutheran Congregation there much weakened, divided. Under these circumstances, I tendered my resignation to the congregation - some wanting me to remain, others wanting a new man; hence on the 3rd Sunday of Dec. which was the 16th day of December, 1883, I preached and made no further appointment.

124. *Church Minute Book I*, St. Johns Lutheran Church, pp. 22-24.

125. *CBI*.

This congregation is in confusion, all growing out of the persistent union leaders herein found, in my humble judgement. Had they advocated a Lutheran house as they did a union house, all had worked on as it should have done. In the opinion of our pastors, faithful Lutherans, the day for union houses is past. The sects, our opponents, should build their own houses, if houses they must have. Lutherans should not build them houses, in which to perpetuate their errors. Even in such a house I did not say I would not preach; for Lutherans preach wherever there is an open door – Error 3 Sundays preached in the same house where truth is preached but one Sunday, in the month, leaves little hope of rapid success for the cause of truth. Lutheran Houses for Lutherans, Lutheran Altars and Lutheran Pulpits for Lutherans only, are the principles I advocate.

It is not clear to me, what shall be the end of all this.

J. M. Smith¹²⁶

Smith's position is perfectly clear. Life-long St. John's family names soon appeared at neighboring congregations, particularly at Conover.¹²⁷

About the first of February, 1884, the congregation submitted a Call to R. A. Yoder, who was then attending a seminary in Philadelphia. He declined due to "some very serious complications then existing" – obviously referring to the dispute about the new building. By March, Pastor Smith was again preaching.¹²⁸

On April 6th, 1884, a formal congregational meeting was held, with the express purpose to "once more make an effort to unite our divided and scattered congregation." Moses Herman was elected Chairman, and F. J. Dellinger, Secretary of these sensitive proceedings to select a new pastor, who could unite the factions. The Chairman placed the name of Rev. Prof. J. C. Moser on the floor in form of a resolution, hoping that the congregation would unite behind him. The first vote was 34 to 9. When the motion was revised to elect Rev. Moser as a "supply" pastor for one year, the vote tallied 36 to 17. Later, the original Preamble and Resolution was adopted unanimously, and J. C. Moser became the Pastor of the Tennessee Synod congregation, although certainly not a united one.¹²⁹

Then the proceedings turned their attention to J. M. Smith, and his comments upon resignation. The minutes include the stern rebuttal to Smith's diary entry above:

Whereas it has been charged against our congregation that we have accepted the resignation of our former pastor Rev. J. M. Smith on the ground that he preached the doctrine of the Lutheran Church too pointedly and forcibly and that he was too severe in his denunciation of error; and whereas we learn that the inference has been drawn that we wish to bind the hands of the man whom we may call to be our pastor in the future; that we desire to dictate what he shall preach, and what he shall not preach, and that we would have him compromise on error.

Be it therefore resolved that we as a congregation, in meeting assembled do repudiate said charge, and the inference that have [sic] been derived from it, and so far as individuals may have used language which may imply to above named objection we repudiate the language, and we hereby reaffirm our fidelity to the Confessions of our beloved Lutheran Church; and will bind any man called to be our pastor only to the Holy Scriptures as set forth in these Confessions.

F. J. Dellinger, Sec 130

With the Elders bound to the congregational vote, a confrontation between Pastor Smith and Elders N. E. Brady, B. E. Smith, and N. E. Sigman occurred on April 19. From J. M. Smith's Journal:

126. *Ibid.*, 1883.

127. *CBI*. The Carpenter family appeared at Bethel; the Deals, at St. Peter's; some of the Hunsuckers, Smiths, and Younts, at Concordia; Also, the Huits, Millers, and Popes moved elsewhere. A few families later returned. See cemeteries at the other churches, where these families were buried. R. A. Yoder, "The Situation in North Carolina," Reviewed by a Committee of Six Missourians," *OCP*, XXII:51, 19 Dec. 1894. Yoder states that most dissatisfied members went to Concordia in Conover, and he would have known first hand, as he was preaching and teaching there.

128. *J. M. Smith Journal*, 1884. Yoder, *OCP*, cited above.

129. *CBI*, 1884. Usually, the pastor was chairman of these meetings, except for discussions about a pastor.

130. *CBI*, 1884.

Statement, St. John's, April 1884

After trouble for a considerable time over the union house at St. John's, a settlement of the worst points - the locking of the house against me & my friends & on the part of individuals faulting me for exposing false doctrines too strongly, was effected by the following as to the first trouble their part:

"That owing to the fact that we were under the impression at the time that Rev. Smith purposed to continue to preach at St. John's against our will, we locked the door. But if that was not his purpose, we made a mistake in so doing. We regret it, and cordially invite him to preach in the church tomorrow." Signed, N. E. Brady, B. E. Smith, N. E. Sigmon -- (Elders)

By opening the house for me to-morrow, is meant for any and all time for service I may be asked to perform, funerals, or for an occasional appointment, if I wish, thus verbally understood. J. M. S.

3332 Sermon - St. John's - 3rd Sun. April 20 '84 - My last at St. John's.131

For the next few years, Smith was only "asked" to preach funerals at St. John's, including Jeff. Holler's child and Fraser's child (1884), Noah Yount (1885), M. Cloninger (1885), D. Hefner's child (1886), Old Grandmother Smith (1887), Charles Henkel's twins (two sons 1887), David Huit (1887), and Mrs. Shook (1888).132

Jason Chrysosdom Moser, grandson of Rev. Daniel Moser and son of Rev. Timothy Moser, accepted the Call as pastor. He had been ordained as Deacon in 1873 and Pastor in 1876 by the Tennessee Synod. He moved to Conover in early 1882, and accepted a position on the faculty of Concordia High School, where he later became President. He was well-known to the congregation through his connections at the school, and for his occasional supply services for Pastor Smith.133

Moser found a distressed congregation that he was unable to unite. Communion lists during Moser's period of service range from 56 to 73 families, and from 118 to 145 total communicants.134

Soon after his removal from St. John's, Smith immediately began holding services at other area locations, including Daniel Roseman's which was not far from the Church. Smith also preached at his father's house near Catawba, and some time later at "Huit's," "Setzer's," and "Witherspoon's" School Houses. At least some of these small congregations were disgruntled former members of St. John's, who preferred Smith as their pastor over Moser. Smith also preached in April 1887 at "Crossing," which later became known as Claremont, and described this meeting as the "first sermon there by anyone." He preached regularly at Crossing for the remainder of 1887, and the nucleus of this congregation was certainly composed of former St. John's members. New Lutheran churches were springing up during this period, as construction had begun on St. Timothy's Church along the railroad west of Conover, and building materials were being "piled up on the lot daily" at Crossing by February of 1888.135

During Moser's period of service of 1883 to 1887, there were a few significant occasions for the St. John's families. There were, of course, typical baptisms and confirmations, but in somewhat smaller numbers than

131. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1884. The phrase "me & my friends" suggests that Smith may have been organizing a second Tennessee Synod congregation in the same building. This cannot be proven beyond the words in the quotation above. Past history of locking a door against a pastor was to prevent access to another congregation. One example is the Organ Church, Rowan County, case, when the door was locked against Daniel Moser (and long-time members) to prevent access to the "Henkelites." A second was the unnamed church who locked the doors against Adam Miller (possibly Beaver Dam, now St. Mark's, Gaston). Other cases can be found where doors were locked against an uninvited pastor of another denomination.

132. *Ibid.*, 1884-1888.

133. *Life Sketches*, p. 149. *J. C. Moser Diary #1* - 1882.

134. *CBI*. There are some discrepancies between the numbers of communicants that can be counted versus the totals sometimes seen at the bottom of these lists. All statistics in this and the paragraph on 1883 were re-calculated from the names on the actual lists.

135. *J. M. Smith Journal*, 1883-1888. *The Newton Enterprise*, 2 February 1888. The church at Crossing became St. Mark's, aligned with the Ohio Synod, and was certainly composed of some former St. John's members. Smith "Father's" house was near Catawba Station, and his father had recently fallen victim to assault and robbery. In the History of St. Timothy, James T. Miller mentions that members from St. John's were charter members of that church. Only one possibility can be identified by this author, and it is not positive that he did not move to St. Timothy by way of Conover/Concordia.

previously. Moser's Ministerial Journal lists the funerals of: Otto Reitzel, a young child; two Shook children of the Ohio Synod congregation; Mr. D. S. Holler's child; Mrs. Warren and child; Mr. Noah E. Brady's child; Mrs. George Hefner; Polly Brady; and Emmanuel Ekard's child. His journal also lists a rare entry for a "colored" baptism at St. John's in 1886, but does not give the name.¹³⁶

But while raising funds to pay for the new building, the weakened congregation struggled to meet its financial obligations to its pastor, and sometimes ran as much as two years behind. By the third Sunday in January, 1888, Pastor Moser accepted a Call to Zion and the Hickory congregation, and resigned at St. John's and Concordia.¹³⁷ His reflections on the move to Hickory were as follows:

Lord, in mercy pardon the mistakes, the imperfections, and the sins which have made my labors in this place, and graciously guide and bless me in the work in which I enter, for Jesus' sake!¹³⁸

The St. John's Tennessee Lutheran congregation found itself with another challenge to select a unifying influence. They returned to Pastor J. M. Smith, who supplied the pulpit from the fifth Sunday in January until the voters meeting in April:

St. John's - I selected - best I can - will try to harmonize the parties -- one a union house party, other against it, I strongly opposed the union house. They built it -- worked me out as Pastor and took in J. C. Moser; he left. They elected one.¹³⁹

After hosting the local pastor's conference on the fourth Saturday and Sunday in February, the congregation again attempted unity with some of the scattering flock.¹⁴⁰ The following resolution was adopted at the May congregational meeting:

Whereas a number of persons formerly members of this congregation withdrew & connected themselves with other congregations, and a number stood aloof, neither connecting themselves with other congregations, nor communing with this congregation, holding membership nowhere; therefore

Resolved, That all who withdrew and all who have been standing aloof, desiring to hold & have membership in this congregation, will be permitted to do so; and on application by certificate from congregations to which they belong, & on application in person to the elders by those who have stood off, by a vote of the congregation, being of good moral character shall be enrolled as members of this congregation and enjoy all church privileges. Should any such returning member wish to donate something toward the expenses of the building of the house or for the organ, it will be thankfully received.

Above was adopted by a congregational meeting held on Sat. before the 1st Sunday in May, 1888.

P. P. Hoke, Sec. 141

Smith returned with conciliatory intentions, and the church construction at Crossing apparently was suspended for several years. Yet several in the congregation would not support Smith and held that the agreement with him be only for supply services through the end of 1888. During this year, the frequency of services increased from one Sunday per month to the first and third Sundays of each month, weather permitting, representing the most regular period of ministry in the congregation's history to this point. Unfortunately, attendance did not improve, and the congregation remained greatly weakened.¹⁴²

On December 30, 1888, J. M. Smith preached his last sermon as regular pastor to St. John's.¹⁴³

136. *J. C. Moser Journal* #1 - 1883-1887.

137. *The Newton Enterprise*, 2 February 1888. From Church records, the shortfall in payment to Moser was in the \$80 to \$90 range, although the records could be incomplete.

138. *J. C. Moser Journal* #1 - 1888.

139. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1888.

140. It appears that the pastors' conferences were often held at churches that were in times of turmoil.

141. *CBI*, 1884.

142. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1888. *CBI*.

143. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1888. *CBI* included subscription lists, which indicate members who would not pledge to pay Smith during this year. See also Stiver, for delay in construction of St. Mark's.

P. C. Henkel and J. M. Smith met on this earth for one last time. No funeral Pastor J. M. Smith ever performed was more widely known throughout the Lutheran Church than the one he performed on Saturday, October 28, 1889. At about 9:00 A. M., on October 26, Dr. Cyprian Polycarp Henkel was called to his heavenly reward. The significance of this man is displayed by the funeral service itself, conducted at St. Peter's, site of Henkel's first sermon back in 1842. Pastor Smith delivered the sermon for his friend and mentor, based on 2 Timothy 4:6-8:

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Hundreds of people attended the service to pay their last respects to this departed spiritual leader. Following the sermon were brief addresses by the pall-bearers, Rev's. Yoder, Schaid, Koiner, Bernheim, Little, and Rudisill -- nearly the entire assemblage of Tennessee Synod pastors in the area.¹⁴⁴

Memorials for Henkel poured forth. Pastor Smith remembered him as a staunch Lutheran:

Rev. P. C. Henkel, D. D., was a good & great man, a deep thinker, great debater, a doctrinal preacher, an author, bust on Baptism, did much to upbuild the Church in Catawba & surrounding counties, yes, in our Southland. He was a strong "four point" man -- i. e., against Altar & Pulpit Fellowship, Secret Societies & Chiliasm. On these & the distinctive doctrines of the Evan. Luth. Church, he was deep & able.

He was a pointed doctrinal preacher, argumentative & controversial, powerful against an opponent, full of Bible knowledge. Most familiar with the word of God. He pointed out errors, errorists, and named them out -- truth & exposing of error in any and all its forms, was his manner of preaching. He had enemies & more friends than any minister in the South.

On Sunday before he died on Thursday he preached a long sermon. He died of a breast complaint. He was perfectly composed in view of death. Faithful soldier, fare thee well. May we meet thee in heaven. J. M. S. 145

The Tennessee Synod mourned the death of one of their leaders, and attached a lengthy memorial to their Synod minutes of that year, from which the following excerpts were taken:

Dr. P. C. Henkel was an extraordinary man, and unique in his character. He has been so long and so favorably known in this country, that anything like an attempt at a sketch of his life, would seem useless; yet we offer these few lines as a tribute of respect to his memory. As a husband and father, he was kind and devoted to his wife and children, anxious for their welfare, both temporal and spiritual, and supplied them with both precept and example.

As a neighbor and citizen, he was kind and obliging, always ready to do a favor, if it were in his power, frequently disobliging himself and family to oblige others.

Intellectually, he was a powerful man. He was an original thinker and a fine logician. He would clinch every argument, and in debate and controversy was a formidable antagonist. He would consider well, make up his opinion deliberately, and when once made up, was very decided. He was immovable from an opinion which was the result of long and careful consideration. He would never, for any consideration, go back on his word. His word was as sacred to him as a most solemn oath. In his manners he was humble and unassuming. Humility was manifest in all his intercourses with his fellow man. Integrity was also a salient point in his character. He was rigidly honest and truthful.

As a minister, he was a power. His style of preaching was expository, plain, and forcible [sic].

He labored exceedingly hard in the vineyard of the Lord. At one time he had pastoral charge of fifteen congregations. He did an immense amount of missionary work, traveled thousands of miles, in cold and heat, and rain and storm, in obedience to the call of the Master to do this work. He never shirked from duty, but was always punctual, and ready to speak the word of encouragement to the weak, the word of comfort to the sorrowing, the word of life to those seeking a knowledge of the way of life. He was an uncompromising antagonist of error, and boldly and fearlessly denounced it whenever he met with it.

As a theologian, he was very profound. His range of study was broad, and his investigations were intense and searching, and descended into the very depths of theological problems, perhaps as far as human mind could go. His chief text-books were the Bible and

144. Henkel, pp. 253-255.

145. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1889.

the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. On Dogmatic Theology he was an acknowledged authority, in the Lutheran Church in the South, at least.

His influence in all the relations in which we have mentioned him, as husband and father, as neighbor and citizen, as a man and as a preacher, and as a theological writer, was very great. In the Lutheran Church of the South, he was, perhaps, the greatest man in its history.

His influence is felt far beyond the limits of his own Synod, even throughout the whole Southern Church. He was in the midst of his earnest labors, both writing and preaching, to raise the Lutheran Church of the South to a higher plain of doctrine and practice, when the Master called him to his reward. Thus ended his work. A good and great man has fallen. 146

In the following years, J. M. Smith's service to the St. John's Lutherans tapered off. He was present at the Centennial Celebration of 1899, but generally his work was limited to funerals, private baptisms, and marriages.¹⁴⁷

The year of 1900 marked J. M. Smith's noticeable efforts to retire. He tendered resignation at Bethel, where he "began at Piney Grove, Jan. 1877 & resigned June 10, 1900," for a total of over 23-1/2 years of service. A week earlier, he resigned at Old St. Paul's, where he had served for 30-1/2 years, the entire period after P. C. Henkel had moved to Missouri. He remained as full-time pastor at St. Peter's, although he took several extended leaves of absence. On December 27, 1903, the 73-year-old Smith finally resigned at St. Peter's.¹⁴⁸

The year 1904 marked the end of another distinguished ministerial career, as Pastor Smith only preached an occasional supply service at area churches through the month of July.¹⁴⁹ In about 1912, Smith moved in with his family near Washington, D. C..

On May 1, 1913, Pastor J. M. Smith followed Henkel to his "crown of life," at the age of eighty-two. His body was returned to Conover, and on May 4th, was buried in Concordia cemetery. He was memorialized by Concordia College Professor C. A. Weiss, as follows:

It is difficult for us of a later day to estimate the self-sacrifice and endurance of men like Pastor Smith. He grew up in very humble surroundings. By working and teaching, he managed to secure a few terms at college. During the year 1856 he lived with Doctor P. C. Henkel, and from him received his theological training. From this time until January, 1904, he served continuously in the ministry. His congregations were in Catawba, Alexander, and Iredell counties. Laborers were few, so that, in the early days, he had to serve more congregations than one pastor should ever have. At one time he had charge of nine congregations in the three counties. Yet we have been told that he did what was in his power to build them up, and he rejoiced when the day came that his former flocks could receive better attention. That he was kept busy may be seen from the fact that, on an average, he preached twice a week during all the forty-seven years of his ministry. Many are they whom he taught, warned, and comforted. The world will forget him, but the record of his labors is kept in heaven. And we may learn from his example to use diligently the talent which has been entrusted to us.¹⁵⁰

The local newspaper remembered him similarly:

... and we know of no native of this county who has left a more lasting impression on the people than he. He was a man of strong intellect, of positive convictions, unswerving courage and a pulpit orator of commanding ability. ... As a theologian, he ranked with the most noted preachers of the South.¹⁵¹

Pastors P. C. Henkel and J. M. Smith maintained either a full-time or part-time presence to the families of the Tennessee Lutheran congregation at St. John's for forty-seven years, 1842-1899. The St. John's congregations were a part of the progress of the coming of the railroad, and were stricken by the devastation caused by the epidemics and war. The Tennessee Lutheran Congregation was, at the first of this era, faced with the division of 1845, and later with the "union" turmoil over the construction of the new church building.

146. Henkel, pp. 254-255.

147. *J. M. Smith Journal*, 1889-1913. See Appendices for list of St. John's funerals.

148. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1900-1903. Smith listed his first service at Piney Grove in 1859, but possibly not engaged on a regular basis until later.

149. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1904.

150. C. A. Weiss, "A Memorial to J. M. Smith," *TLW*, XXXII:19, (Sept. 11, 1913), pp. 146-147. The local newspaper obituary states the date of death as May 2.

151. *Newton Enterprise*, 8 May 1913.

As the period of major influence of Henkel and Smith was beginning to subside, the beginning of a quite different and previously-unpredictable era in St. John's history was unfolding.
Additional challenges were to test the faiths of the St. John's Lutherans.

Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? Psalms 15:1

EPILOGUE:

By Judy Mitchell

With much sadness I write that the above was Mark Smith's last sentence. He died while doing his work for the Lord. There is no greater requiem for any man than to have died in God's service. The time stamp on his computer was May 27, 1996 at 15:57 PM. When I checked the accuracy of his computer clock, it was still on Eastern Standard Time. One hour off. The correct time was 16:57 PM (4:57) on Monday, May 27, 1996. He was 45 years old.

Mark had a lot of sadness in his personal life. This work was his salvation. He had dedicated the last three years of his life to it at the expense of almost everything else. We who loved him missed him sorely as he closed himself off from us to do this research. I hope his family, friends, and all who loved him will find comfort, as I did, in knowing that he took this last walk with the Lord, and He loved him so much He just took him. Guard Heaven's gates, Mark. We all hope to meet you there one day.

Love,
Judy

Chapter 9

LUTHERAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding: For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. Proverbs 3: 13-14

After recovery from the Civil War, the South, and the Catawba Valley could focus their energies on more positive items.

The railroad, completed through Catawba County just prior to the Civil War, was again under construction from Morganton to Asheville. Along its path, "Stations" were springing up. Included were the prosperous "Catawba Station" on the eastern edge of the county, and "Hickory Tavern Station" to the west. Newton, the county seat, had no direct rail line. In order to reach Newton by rail, a west-bound train would back up from a location commonly called the "Y", near the crossing of Oxford Ford Road and the railroad tracks. An east-bound train would simply switch over to the south spur and proceed to the dead end of the tracks near Newton, and would need to back up to return to the main tracks.

Soon, a few businesses arose at the "Y", which had become known as "Canova." In 1875, a boarding house serving the rail travelers advertised as follows:

**SMYER HOUSE,
CANOVA, N. C.**

F. S. SMYER, Proprietor.

This House is now open for the reception
of guests. The table will be supplied with
the best that the market affords.

TERMS MODERATE. 1

In 1875, the Western North Carolina Railroad made its daily trips from Salisbury to Old Fort, and from Old Fort to Salisbury. The west-bound trains stopped at Catawba Station, Newton, Canova, and Hickory in Catawba County, and other towns and stations to the east and west. Those wishing to travel west should expect to hear the steam locomotive's roar at Canova at 11:11 A. M. with departure at 11:14. The eastbound train left Old Fort at 4:00 A. M. and awoke some of the later sleepers in Canova at 8:28 -- to depart two minutes later. It arrived in Salisbury nearly four and one-half hours later. The train fare from Canova to Salisbury for a special event, such as the Salisbury Fair, was reduced to one dollar.² The trip to Salisbury would normally have taken nearly two days on horseback.

About that time and in the next few years, other businesses established themselves at the crossing of the major road and the railroad, including other rooming houses, livery stables, and various merchants and cottage industries, such as shoe and harness makers. Heavier industries which required other sources of power included Conover Flouring Mill and Pierce Yount's Sash Mill, which was beside the railroad, and also specialized in blinds and doors.³ On January 16, 1877, the charter to incorporate a town named "Conover" was approved. Civil War

1 Advertisement, *The Piedmont Press*, Sat. October 2, 1875, p. 2. *Piedmont Press* was a circulating weekly newspaper in Hickory.

2. *Ibid.* On the same page was the railroad schedule. The westbound train served breakfast at Salisbury, and Dinner at Hickory at 11:50 A. M. Note that these schedules changed regularly, and this was the schedule effective June 7, 1875. Later schedules list the station as "Conova." Sometime in the 1880's, the train ceased to stop at this location entirely.

3. R. A. Yoder's *Map of Catawba County, 1886* locates Rowe's Mill and the Sash Mill. *The Piedmont Press* listed the "flouring mill" in an 1886 issue. *The Newton Enterprise*, often listed the boarding houses, livery stables, and some of the merchants in the early 1880's. Citations would be lengthy.

veteran, Captain Peter F. Smith, brother of Reverend J. M. Smith and from a St. John's member family, became the first mayor of Conover.

As specialized industries, such as Conover Manufacturing Company, Bolick Buggy Shop, and others began springing up along the railroad, the once rural population of Catawba County began looking towards the towns and villages. When the rural populace recognized that the railroad could easily haul its timber of oak, hickory, persimmon, and walnut to the coast, and eventually to the elusive manufacturing markets of Europe, many landowners found a native cash crop on their property, and a means of selling it for a profit -- only to see this lumber return to the area in the form of expensive furniture. As the flour and other mill enterprises were established, a market was created for grain, timber, and other farm products. Goods were now easily exported by rail to the larger cities of Charlotte and Salisbury, and even to Charleston. It would not be long before these same people began to use their own talents in converting their timber into furniture locally.

This evolution of commerce along the railroad's path soon led to the formation of village churches near these centers of business and industry, and the various St. John's congregations were affected.

Politics was no stranger to the northern part of Catawba County, as its citizens held regular offices in county government. In the late 1800's, a barbecue was advertised in the Oxford Ford area of Cline's Township, "the banner township of North Carolina", which as usual, "will roll up a practically unanimous [sic] vote for the Democratic candidates." Approximately 1500 to 2000 attended to support Governor Cyrus Vance, and the local and national slate of candidates, whose speeches were "as all good Democrats delight to hear."⁴ It would take many years before the fallout from the Civil War would gain a semblance of political balance in this district, and Benjamin Harrison was elected President after the well-attended barbecue.

Although there may have been a few more dollars entering certain pockets of the area, the rural populace around St. John's felt little comfort in the post-war days. A part of the problem was the lack of a strong labor force that had been decimated by the War and had caused some alienation between the races and resultant migration of some of the freedmen population. The language of one who was born, baptized, and confirmed in St. John's Church is used to describe the conditions about the time of his childhood in the 1870's, and while living within sight of the old log Church.

Aside from these losses (due to the Civil War), the privation of the poverty surrounding the ancestral home during the period of Reconstruction and Carpetbaggers made life there one far removed from a land of Paradise. There were no electric lights-they used smoking tallow candles; there were no refrigerators-they used a milk-box down by the spring; there were no washing machines-mothers scrubbed their clothes on a board after boiling them in a washtub in the backyard; there were no canned goods in the store - peaches and apples were cut and dried in the sun; there was little sugar and coffee - the few pounds of coffee people did get were used so sparingly that it scarcely colored the hot water one was drinking, and molasses was largely used instead of sugar; there were no automobiles or streetcars or even buggies - travel was either by walking, or on horseback, or in a wagon or clumsy kind of thing called a carriage; there were no paved roads - just mud-lanes called roads; there were no clothing stores or ladies dress shoppes - wool was sheared off the sheep and spun into thread on the spinning wheel and woven into "linsey" for women's dresses and into "jeans" for men's clothes. There were no shoe stores - the hides from the cattle killed for beef were taken to the neighboring tanyard and made into leather which was made into heavy, clumsy shoes, children went barefooted in the summer time, and got one pair of shoes for the rest of the year; there was no shoe polish - people often used soot out of the chimney to "polish" their shoes; there were no dyes with which to color the "linsey" dresses and "jeans" suits - mama made these clothes by hand and colored them with the bark and roots of trees and other plants. One seldom ever saw a painted house - paint was hard to get, and there was little money to buy it, if found; houses were built mostly of logs and planks sawed by hand or by a "sash" saw driven by water power; there were no steam engines, gas engines, electric motors - all work had to be done by man-power or horse-power or water-power. There were no "movies", base-ball, foot-ball, basket-ball, tennis courts, amusement parks, etc. - in school they played "bull-pen" or "bat ball" or "town ball" and social activities consisted of "corn shuckings", "cotton pickings", "log rollings", "house-raising", home-gatherings, community singings, picnics, camp meetings and church activities. In the country districts there were no dailies (newspapers), no libraries, almost no books for schools, no magnificent school buildings, heated by a central heating plant, to which children came in a bus for eight or nine months in the year to teachers with A. B. or A. M. degrees - buildings were made of logs, heated by fire-places with wood cut by the pupils themselves, to which children came on foot through cold and rain and snow and mud to teachers who would do the job for the smallest salary, for three or, sometimes, four months in the year.

4. "Local News," *The Newton Enterprise*, 25 October 1888 and 1 November 1888.

Such were the social, educational, recreational, religious conditions at the time when I was born (1874), and for the first years of my childhood. The public school which I attended was a log building with the cracks between the logs closed up with red mud (which sometimes dropped out and left a hole large enough to put a cat through), with benches without backs, with a floor made of planks between which were cracks so large that, if we dropped our pencils, they'd often go through and land on the ground under the house. We drank water brought from a spring down in the woods at the foot of a hill, using a dipper which served ALL the children without thought of sanitation.⁵

Lest the clouds above bear no silver lining, the author of this dismal state of rural affairs was later introduced to Local LUTHERAN Higher Education, and later become known as the Reverend Carroll Orrestes (C. O.) Smith.

Lutheran Higher education??? Locally??? How can this be???

There are no universities or seminaries here!!!!

Behold . . .

BACKGROUND ON LUTHERAN HIGHER EDUCATION.

Several histories exist regarding the foundations of Lutheran higher education in Catawba County. Each was written based on a limited point of view that failed to recognize, or minimized the existence of, the other entities attempting to establish successful schools. Other than Old St. Paul's or Miller's, Catawba County, only a history of St. John's offers the possibility of examining the inter-relationship of the various Lutheran Synods during the difficult period when these institutions of higher education were being founded. At the beginning of this period, St. John's housed two Lutheran congregations. J. M. Smith served the Tennessee Synod congregation, and was instrumental in the formation of Concordia College, at Conover. The Tennessee Synod Re-Organized congregation aligned with Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States in 1884, under its pastor, G. L. Hunt. The Practical English Seminary, later St. Paul's Academy, was founded by the Concordia District, and soon had St. John's next pastor, L. M. Hunt, on its faculty. By the end of this period, Lenoir College was founded. All of this occurred within a time period of fourteen years.

Speculation on Christian education in Catawba County can be traced back to the 1760's, by which time a schoolhouse was built, and Rev. John Frederick Doubber owned nearby property.

The first formal attempt at establishment of an institution in the area occurs in 1813, when Lutheran Pastor Philip Henkel and Presbyterian Pastor Humphrey Hunter were on the original charter of Pleasant Retreat Academy in Lincolnton, North Carolina.⁶ Nothing in the Charter indicated that this school was to be either Lutheran or Presbyterian, but the Protestant influence on its curriculum is apparent.

After Philip Henkel's relocation to Tennessee, he and Joseph E. Bell started a short-lived institution of higher education in eastern Tennessee. The problems with the North Carolina Synod that led to formation of the Tennessee Synod promptly removed the promise of its success.⁷ Upon his ordination in 1819, Rev. Joseph E. Bell, "late graduate of Union Seminary," in Tennessee, was called to return to Pleasant Retreat, Lincoln Academy, as principal teacher, in 1820.⁸ After the North Carolina Synod aligned with the General Synod, a seminary was founded at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, during the 1820's.⁹

The German Reformers first conducted classes at Catawba College in Newton, in 1851.¹⁰ Youth of various Protestant denominations made use of Catawba College for the opportunities for higher education locally, and of

5. *Smith Autobiography*, no page numbers.

6. Oscar Lee Kiser, "The Growth and Development of Education in Gaston County", Graduate thesis at U.N.C., (Chapel Hill, NC: 1928), p. 20.

7. Peschau's, *NC Synod Minutes*, pp. 34, 37, 46.

8. Charles L. Coon, *North Carolina Schools and Academies 1790-1840*, (No Publisher named: 1915), p. 196.

9. Graebner, p. 326.

10. Peeler, p. 57.

course, area Lutherans were included in attendees. Some students of Catawba College matriculated to become Lutheran Pastors, including J. M. Smith, who was one of its early students and assistant instructor for a brief period.¹¹ Later, Marcus Lafayette Little, who was a grandson of former St. John's elder John Smith, and great-grandson of former St. John's elder Peter Little, Sr., attended this institution.¹² Other Lutheran pastors who got their classical education at Catawba were Maxwell Brown, Adolphus Yount, Eli E. Smyre, W. H. Holler, and William Pinckney Cline.¹³

In 1858, the North Carolina Lutheran Synod established a school that became known as North Carolina College, in Mt. Pleasant. Soon thereafter, a female school, named Mont Amoena, was founded, and came under Synodical control in 1869.¹⁴

In the southeast, the Virginia Lutherans had established Roanoke College, in Salem, in 1853, and the South Carolinians, Newberry College, in 1858.¹⁵ Other Synods, including Ohio and Missouri, had founded seminaries within their geographical areas.

Several primary schools had been formed in Catawba County prior to the Civil War, and both P. C. Henkel and J. M. Smith began their adult careers as teachers at these schools.¹⁶

When Henkel departed for Missouri in 1870, this left the Catawba County area with a single pastor to serve eight Tennessee Synod congregations and 1,500 communicant members--Rev. J. M. Smith.¹⁷ Were it not for Smith's efforts during this period, the Tennessee Synod in this area could have become extinct. Shortage of pastors had reached critical proportions, and few were being trained.

As early as 1852, the Tennessee Synod recognized the necessity for an institution of higher learning, and resolved, "That the Synod devise some plan for the establishment of a Literary Institution, which will not conflict with our present Constitution." Since the Tennessee Synod still maintained a strict separation of Church and State, it had never incorporated, was not a legal entity, and therefore, could not own property itself. Further resolutions were made to poll the various congregations, and to set up an Educational Convention, coincident with the next meeting. At this Convention, the delegates were charged to "devise a plan" and "prepare a Constitution" for such an institution. The committee of Revs. P. C. Henkel, J. R. Peterson, and D. M. Henkel was appointed.¹⁸

When the movement for establishment of an educational institution was brought in front of its congregations in 1853, at least eighteen letters were submitted, advising against this project on constitutional grounds.¹⁹ The committee was "discharged," and the project was abandoned for many years.

By 1866, the Tennessee Synod had amended its Constitution to engage in "the work of Beneficiary Education, for the purpose of preparing indigent young men of talents and piety for the work of the ministry in connection with the Lutheran Church, according to such regulations as it may adopt and consider best calculated to promote these great objects."²⁰ This did not include any specific provision for corporate status, nor is the word

11. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1852-1853.

12. William Herbert Little, "The Reverend Marcus Lafayette Little, 1848-1891", unpublished manuscript, (1941), p. 1. Copy of manuscript and information about the family connection to St. John's is from the files of Gwen Bost Sherrill, Conover, N. C. William Herbert Little was son of Pastor M. L. Little.

13. *The Piedmont Press*, "The Professional Men of Catawba High School," no author named, October 2, 1875, p. 1. This article was apparently a press release to proclaim the achievements of Catawba High School. Reformed pastors educated at Catawba High School up to the date of the article include J. C. Clapp, John Foil, J. H. Shuford, P. M. Trexler, John Ingle, and a Pastor Hedrick. Attorneys included Ruben McBrayer and M. E. Lowrance. Doctors included J. Campbell, Albert Fox, Thomas Crowell, Quince Little, Wm. Crouse, S. Yount, and Albert Huit. *TN Synod Minutes-1870* lists two of these persons in its President's Report.

14. Morgan, pp. 117-119.

15. Norris and Boatmon, p. 13.

16. Letter from P. C. Henkel to "Uncle," Henkel Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. *J. M. Smith Diary*-1852-3.

17. *J. M. Smith Diary* -1870. R. A. Yoder, *Situation in North Carolina*, hereinafter referenced *Situation*, (Newton, NC, 1894), p. 7. This is one of the primary sources of information on the history of Concordia and Lenoir (Rhyne) College, taking the point of view of the Tennessee Synod and those wanting the college permanently located in Hickory. Copy obtained from North Carolina Synod Archives. *TN Synod Minutes-1870* gives a parochial report of eight congregations and 1500 communicants -- the largest number in the Synod.

18. Henkel, pp. 133-134, 137.

19. *TN Synod Minutes-1853*, p. 10.

20. Henkel, p. 35.

"institution" included. The Synod provided funds for aspiring candidates for the ministry to attend area institutions for their classical instruction. They may not have trusted them for education in theology.

All of the ingredients were present--a strong Lutheran populace, a shortage of pastors, a Synodical framework to promote "young men" for higher education leading towards the ministry, a college in North Carolina that was being run by another Synod, and the Reformed's Catawba College in Newton. All it took was a spark to ignite local sentiment.

THE FORMATION OF CONCORDIA COLLEGE AT CANOVA.²¹

In 1874, it happened! A series of theological debates was held between the Rev. J. M. Smith and the Rev. Daniel May, a Methodist minister from the Newton area. They began on August 7 and 8 of that year, with the first topic being "Confession and Absolution." The debates continued on August 20-22, when the subject was "Baptism and the Lord's Supper," and were concluded on the last Saturday of November, when "work of the Holy Ghost" was discussed. The topic, "Is Christ's Body Present in the Lord's Supper?," as included in the second series, proved to be particularly interesting to the spectators. This subject had been a point of theological controversy since the sixteenth century, and it was not to be decided to the satisfaction of all observers during this debate. There was no question as to the staunchly-Lutheran stand Reverend Smith took, nor that of his opponent, May. This debate stirred so much attendance that the extravaganza was moved from the Reformed Church in Newton (White Church) to the debating stand at the Courthouse Square.²²

The Methodists reliably supported their standard-bearer, and the Lutherans did likewise. But it became obvious to the Lutherans during this encounter, that the Reformed were also in support of the views of the Methodist Pastor May. Submitting Lutheran youth to the teachings of their Reformed institution of higher education was no longer felt appropriate by many partial observers, especially when word reached the Lutheran homes that the Catawba College professors were teaching the same as Reverend May.²³

This agitation prompted many Lutherans, including Mr. Andrew Holler living near Canova, to approach Rev. Smith and offer the proposition for a distinctively Lutheran institution of higher education.²⁴

In summer of 1875, the self-named "porcupine," Rev. P. C. Henkel visited the area from Missouri, and a second debate was held with Pastor May in April. This followed in July, when Rev. F. A. Schmidt of St. Louis confronted the strong-voiced May in a similar encounter spanning several days. Attendance at these events was large, with some of the attendees traveling over ten miles. The theological issue was not to be unanimously decided, but the wave of sentiment grew. Henkel was encouraged to remain in the area, but declined. However, he left the promise of hope, that he would return if "he could be instrumental in building up a Lutheran school in this section."²⁵

Soon, the Lutherans near Canova set up a meeting in Newton, relative to the school, and the issue arose as to the location of such a school, with some delegates favoring Canova, Newton, and Hickory. Col. Walter W. Lenoir made a large acreage tract available in the Hickory area for purposes of construction of a Protestant institution of higher learning, providing \$10,000 was raised for purposes of building construction. A committee, consisting of Moses Huit, Jacob Mosteller, and Darius Seitz, was appointed to investigate the various merits of location, and

21. The early history of the formation of Concordia College was hotly contested at a later time, resulting in many conflicts in dates, times, places and motives. Where these occur, in the absence of more reliable information, the conflicts are footnoted with proper authority cited.

22. W. H. T. Dau, Geo. A. Romoser, J. M. Smith, L. Buchheimer, C. L. Coon, C. H. Bemheim, *Review of R. A. Yoder's "Situation in North Carolina"*, hereinafter referenced *Review*, (No publisher or date listed, but date was Oct. or Nov. 1894), p. 5, with copy obtained from St. John's Archives. This publication is the answer to "Situation in North Carolina," and promotes the Missouri Synod actions and those desiring a Conover location for the college. Harry Raymond Voight, "The History of Concordia College of Conover, North Carolina", thesis, (August 1951), pp. 3-4, cited from Rev. P. C. Wike, who attended the debates as a boy, and related this in a letter dated March 2, 1950. Copy obtained from C. O. Smith family. *J. M. Smith Diary* -1874 is source for the debate dates and topics.

23. *Review*, p. 5. Voight, p. 4.

24. *Review*, p. 5.

25. *Ibid*.

secured a bond for the Hickory site. At the next meeting in Newton, the committee recommended Hickory, and the delegation agreed that Hickory was where the school should be built.²⁶

It took Smith little time to garner his Lutheran forces. At the Tennessee Synod meeting of 1875, he informed "Synod that the congregations in Catawba County, North Carolina, had decided to establish a high school of a strictly Lutheran character." The Synod was obviously pleased, and encouraged this effort.²⁷

However, the good intentions of the promoters of such a project, coupled with the good wishes of a Synod, do not provide the financing for a college. Only about \$1,200 was subscribed for this effort, and therefore, Col. Lenoir's financial obligation was not met, and construction was not begun in Hickory.²⁸

An additional series of meetings ensued, and selection of a site was considered time and time again. It was first Hickory, then Canova, then Hickory, etc.. In Spring of 1876, the Canova location was selected at a meeting at St. James.²⁹

Nothing much was accomplished during the latter part of 1876, and the college prospects appeared dismal.³⁰

At this point, the author questions the readers. Who would be the perfect person to help organize and provide the necessary theological support for such an endeavor? Who, when challenged in debate by a Ph.D., humorously stated "it can't be did"? Who would have the "clout" with the Tennessee Synod to get their support? Who would be able to garner the faith of the community for this project? Who would work towards the fund-raising required for such a major task as forming a college? Who had promised that he would return to this section for one reason, and one reason only? A plea went forth to Missouri.

On April 21, 1877, Dr. Polycarp Henkel arrived in the newly-chartered town of Conover, to his newly-constructed house.³¹ His express intent was the formation of the new Lutheran institution of higher education.

Sometime during 1876 or early 1877, a meeting was held and the site issue was re-examined. Finally, it was agreed that the three competing towns canvass their locales for subscriptions towards construction of the school in their communities. Upon Henkel's return, a meeting was held at St. Paul's with explanation that the school be "a distinctively Lutheran school, where the Bible and Luther's Catechism should be taught daily." The subscription campaign resulted in \$2,500 in favor of Conover, the \$1,200 for Hickory, and \$800 for a Newton location.³² Newton already had Catawba College, which might explain the position of their citizens. Hickory, being much larger than Conover, should have been able to easily raise more subscriptions towards their preferred location, but was without a local congregation. The only explanation for success in the fund-raising was that the heartbeats of formation of a Lutheran College resided in the bodies of two Conover-area pastors and their local churches.

Early efforts towards obtaining college property included a survey, as performed by J. Pat Cline of Conover, on June 28, 1877.³³

On August 18, 1877, a meeting was conducted at St. John's. Present at the meeting were Henkel, Smith, Henry Goodman, M. L. Little, D. W. Moose, A. M. Huit, D. D. Seitz, Andrew Holler, and others. Dr. Henkel was elected President of the Board of Trustees, and Smith, Secretary. The property was offered by J. P. Spencer,

26. *Situation*, p. 6. *Review*, p. 5.

27. Henkel, p. 199.

28. *Review*, p. 5.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6. R. A. Yoder, "The Situation in North Carolina' Reviewed by a Committee of Six Missourians," *OCP*, XXII:48 through XXIII:4, 28 November 1894 through 31 January 1895, hereinafter cited *Situation-OCP*. The date of the Conover site selection was hotly contested for many years. Conover proponents contended the year was 1877, allegedly to involve P. C. Henkel in the site selection. Yoder then stated in *OCP* that the Conover location was "emphatically" decided at a meeting at St. James in the spring of 1876 (without citation of source). However, Yoder cites a letter, dated June 1876, from A. L. Yount (then a theological student), who was teaching school near Conover, "a College and Theological Seminary has been located at Conover by J. M. Smith." The 1876 date is not known to have been contested after Yoder's publication of Yount's letter.

30. *Review*, pp. 5-6. *Situation-OCP*. The two sources agree on the prospects of a college, but one cites financial problems, and the other involves personalities. The fund-raising did not approach \$10,000, as required by Col. Lenoir.

31. *P. C. Henkel Diary*, 1877. *Situation-OCP*. That Henkel chose Conover for his house location indicates that the site was selected in 1876 or early 1877, else the house would not have been completed by April 1877.

32. *Review*, p. 6.

33. *Situation-OCP*.

Conover's town constable, and accepted by the Board of Trustees. Preliminary steps were taken to erect the buildings.³⁴ The site was situated just east of the railroad on one of the highest locations in the community. It was convenient to the merchants two blocks away on Oxford Ford Road and was near the road leading to Island Ford.³⁵

But the site selection still troubled a few persons about eight or ten miles to the west. The discussion was far from over -- even after construction commenced and the school was established at Conover.

At the Tennessee Synod's 1877 meeting, two events occurred that encouraged formation of the college. Reverend P. C. Henkel, "having been called back from Missouri to Conover, North Carolina, to lead in the permanent establishment of a school of a high grade, at the latter place, was unanimously received into the Synod." Also, Reverend Charles Herman Bernheim was a corresponding member from the North Carolina Synod, and regularly served in that capacity. Three years later, Bernheim withdrew from the North Carolina Synod, was admitted as a member of the Tennessee Synod, became a strong supporter of the Conover college effort, and later became its financial agent.³⁶

Robert A. Yoder was a recent graduate, and class valedictorian, of North Carolina College at Mt. Pleasant. He attempted to locate employment in Hickory and was unsuccessful. Yoder then "sought in Conover the counsel of the most prominent ministers in the Tennessee Synod, John M. Smith and Polycarp C. Henkel." He began teaching parochial classes to nineteen pupils in a private home on March 11, 1878, as well as for the young public school system. Meanwhile, he was studying theology under Henkel and Smith, and was boarding at the former's house.³⁷

After less than a year back from Missouri, Dr. Henkel was elected President of the Tennessee Synod in 1878, and the Synod's center of influence was entrenched around Conover.³⁸

In September of 1878, the administrative building was completed, and worship services were held in its chapel by the Conover congregation, many of whom were members of St. John's. "The congregation at Conover, Catawba County, North Carolina, was received" into the Tennessee Synod that fall. Its later name was Concordia.³⁹

By the 1879 school year, the co-educational Concordia High School advertised its enrollment as sixty-one, and stability seemed likely.⁴⁰

The Trustees made requests that the Tennessee Synod accept the school as its institution, beginning in 1877 and continuing with regularity thereafter. Synodical response was not enthusiastic. However, the 1878 meeting contained the following encouragement:

As a school has been established at Conover, Catawba County, N. C., called Concordia High School, under church influence, as a congregational enterprise, perhaps it would be well for Synod to appoint a committee to examine into the propriety of making it a synodical enterprise, if it can be done consistent with the designs and character of the school, and report to the next Synod.⁴¹

At the following year's meeting, the committee was not ready to report; however, Synod offered subsidies for a student to attend Concordia High School. The original committee was discharged and the following was agreed upon:

34. Review, p. 6. The original Trustee Records are not known to exist.

35. The college site became the location of Concordia Church in 1958, and the railroad then ran on the west boundary of the property. Island Ford Road through Conover later became Main Street.

36. Henkel, pp. 205, 211.

37. Willard E. Wight, "Robert Anderson Yoder, 1853-1911, A Social Biography", unpublished manuscript, graduate thesis at Emory University, Atlanta, (1949), p. 30, cited from R. A. Yoder's Diary, July 16, 1877 to Feb. 9, 1878. Wight had the Yoder diary in his possession when writing this thesis, and referenced it liberally. He described the diary as containing dates, times, and places, but with rare documentation as to the reasons behind the events. Howard J. Patten, *Hope is Remembering with Praise, Concordia 100 Years*, (Conover, NC, 1980), pages not numbered.

This is the centennial history of Concordia Church and College, published by Concordia Church.

38. Henkel, p. 206.

39. *Ibid.*

40. Patten, no page numbers.

41. *TN Synod Minutes-1878*, p. 6.

Whereas, the proprietors of the Concordia High School, at Conover, N. C., is desirous to be under the supervision and control of this Synod, and,

Whereas, We need a School of that grade under church influence, and the Synod would rejoice at seeing such arrangement, be it

Resolved, That a committee of two be appointed to take the initiary steps in co-operation with the proprietors of the school, to bring about this result, and report to the next meeting of Synod.⁴²

In 1880, the Tennessee Synod meeting was held at St. Peter's, Catawba County, beginning on November 11, 1880. It was at this meeting that the Tennessee Synod made another movement towards a formal adoption of Concordia College, by way of another committee. The minutes cite:

Whereas, The trustees of Concordia High School, Conover, North Carolina, have made a proposition to Synod to take this Institution under her care and supervision, and

Whereas, It is the desire and wish of this Synod to have an institution of learning in her connection, therefore,

Resolved, That a committee of three, on the part of Synod, be appointed to confer with the trustees of said school, and prepare an agreement which may serve as a basis upon which said school may become the recognized institution of Synod, and that this committee be required to report to the next Synod.

Resolved, further, That we hereby recommend Concordia High School to the members of our Church, and to the public generally, as a school of meritorious character.⁴³

Reverends J. C. Moser, J. R. Peterson, and C. H. Bernheim were appointed to the committee to draw up the agreement, and A. Costner, Esq. and C. T. Sigman were included as lay-members. In 1881, the committee was "not prepared to report and requests that the same be continued." No Synodical action followed in 1882.⁴⁴ During these last two years, Concordia College's progress under the leadership of Professor R. A. Yoder and his new bride, Rosa, was positively reported to the body.⁴⁵

Part of the reluctance in endorsing the institution was due to other educational influences in the area. In 1879, the citizens near Dallas in Gaston County were also catching the education fever, and constructed an impressive, two-story school building that became known as Gaston High School, and later Gaston College.⁴⁶

On February 11, 1881, the North Carolina General Assembly ratified "An act to incorporate the Trustees of Concordia College, situated in Conover, in Catawba County, North Carolina." The College was now a legal entity, could buy and sell real estate, could enter into contracts, etc., but with a maximum debt of \$1000. Included in the Charter was the following provision:⁴⁷

That it shall not be lawful for any person or persons to manufacture or sell any wines or spirituous or malt liquors to any person within two miles of said Concordia College, except for medicinal purposes, and any person or persons violating any of the provisions of this act, shall be considered guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be fined not exceeding fifty dollars nor imprisoned not more than thirty days for each and every offence [sic].⁴⁸

The 1883 Tennessee Synod meeting was convened in the College Chapel, beginning on October 13. The "Catalog of Concordia College" for the 1882-1883 school year indicated a total enrollment of 125 students, not differentiating the number for each term, nor how many may have been in its parochial department. The delinquent report from the committee on Concordia High School was presented and adopted:

42. *TN Synod Minutes—1879*, pp. 12-13, 17. Willie A. Smith (son of J. M. Smith) was offered the subsidy, but he turned it down.

43. Henkel, pp. 211-212.

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 212-214.

45. Henkel, pp. 212-214. Patten, no page numbers.

46. Little, p. 5.

47. Voight, pp. 24-25, cited from Henry W. Horst, *Important Facts and Records of Concordia College, Conover, North Carolina*, (Rock Island, Illinois: 1932), p. vii.

48. "The Charter of Concordia College, Conover, N. C.," *The Lutheran Witness*, XII:12, June 4, 1903, pp. 91-92, hereafter cited as *TLW*. This quotation is from the charter as amended at a later date.

We, the committee, appointed by Synod to confer with the Trustees of Concordia College, and prepare an agreement which may serve as a basis upon which said school may become the recognized institution of Synod, present the following report:

A meeting of the Board of Trustees having been called, the following resolution was adopted:

Whereas, There seems to be a general desire to establish proper relations between Concordia College and the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, and

Whereas, It is generally believed that such relations would inure to the interest of this school, as well as to the good of the Synod or Church, at a meeting held in said institution on October 15th, by the Board of Trustees, the Faculty, and others immediately interested, the following action was taken:

Resolved, That, with a view of establishing proper relations between Concordia College, situated at Conover, North Carolina, and the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, we, in meeting assembled, agree,

1. that whenever a vacancy, or vacancies, occur, either by death, resignation, or removal, in the Board of Trustees or in the Faculty, the said Synod shall have the right as well as the privilege to recommend a suitable person, or persons, to fill such vacancy, or vacancies;

2. that the Synod shall have the right to appoint a Board of Visitors, whose duty it shall be annually to visit said school, and make such report of the condition of the school to each session of the Synod, as may be deemed most advantageous;

3. that it shall be the duty of the President of the Faculty to make a report annually to Synod, relative to the moral and literary condition of the school, which report shall also be signed by the secretary of the faculty;

4. that the President of the Board of Trustees shall also make an annual report to Synod, in regard to the financial condition of the school, which report shall likewise be signed by the secretary of the Board of Trustees;

5. that this school shall be continued and conducted as a church institution, under such rules and regulations, as may be instituted by the Board of Trustees, in accordance with the charter, and the Confessions of the Church as set forth in the Christian Book of Concord, each teacher, instructor, or professor, taking an obligation not to teach anything in said school that is contrary to said Confessions.

These stipulations or propositions shall be valid and in force, provided the said Synod shall acquiesce, and is disposed to lend said institution its fostering care and encouragement, as well as its influence and moral force; provided, that if the Synod shall fail, after notice, to recommend, in due time, a suitable person or persons to fill such vacancy or vacancies, the proper authorities of said institution, shall proceed to fill such vacancy or vacancies.

The following was offered and adopted:

Resolved, That we, as a Synod, accept the propositions made to us by the Board of Trustees of Concordia College, and that in consideration of the rights and privileges therein granted, we will lend to said institution our fostering care, influence, and moral support.⁴⁹

After much work and persistence, Concordia College was supported by an entity much larger than itself-- The Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod. Unfortunately, this "fostering care, influence, and moral support" was not unanimously endorsed, and did not guarantee a dime of financial support for the cause.

At the 1884 meeting of the Tennessee Synod, favorable reports were submitted from the Trustees, and Rev. A. L. Crouse, Hon. A. Koiner, Rev. R. A. Yoder, Maj. J. A. Meetze, and Mr. D. H. Wheeler were included as trustees. C. H. Bernheim, now financial agent for the College, was elected President of the Synod.⁵⁰

In 1885, with J. M. Smith presiding and R. A. Yoder as Secretary, the Tennessee Synod finally offered financial assistance to the college, by agreeing to pay for the support of \$800.00 per year for a theological Professor, to be raised by requesting a contribution of twelve cents from each church member. This financial effort was intended to replace the significant volunteer efforts, in teaching and as President, of the elderly P. C. Henkel, who resigned due to failing health:

Resolved, That in the acceptance of the resignation of Rev. P. C. Henkel, as President of Concordia College, by this Synod, it does so with regret, and only under a sense of duty which is due under statements and representations made by him; and, in parting with him, the Synod desires to express its most hearty thanks for the sacrifices which he has made gratuitously for the institution, and prays God's richest blessings upon him.⁵¹

49. Henkel, pp. 218, 221-223. Voight, pp. 20-21.

50. Henkel, p. 228-230.

51. *Ibid.*, pp. 231-232.

Rev. Prof. J. C. Moser was appointed President of the College to replace Henkel.⁵²

The year 1886 marked a milestone for the young institution. Rev. Junius S. Koiner accepted the Call as Professor of Theology, he soon became a pastor at Concordia congregation, and the college finally matriculated its first graduate. David Polycarp (P. C.) Wike, who was baptized at St. John's and confirmed at St. James, graphically remembered the events of commencement day, as reported in letters to his relatives:

I was the first graduate of Concordia College at Conover. When that school opened its first freshman year, there were thirteen of us in that first class. When three years rolled around and the Sen[ior] year opened, I was the only graduate and the first one of the college. . . . Examine the record I was it!! Hundreds of people attending the first graduating exercises of Concordia, and but one graduate. Did I make a speech that day!! Yes and win!! Some of the 13 quit Concordia and had gone to other colleges – especially to Roanoke, to get a little more prestige, as they supposed. One of my Proffs, advised me to go too. I said no. I started with Concordia and there I'm going to graduate. . . .⁵³

You can tell the world that graduating was a great day in my life. I was valedictorian and all that goes with it. During the college course I was studying theology; also. I had fine instructors [sic], the best was Dr. P. C. Henkel. He was a wonderful reasoner, and one of the strongest preachers I ever heard. He started me preaching.⁵⁴

These exercises featured the excellent music of the "Conover Silver Cornet Band," and a distinctive array of speeches, sermons, debates, and theatrical productions. Concordia College's first graduate soon became known as Rev. P. C. Wike. As the Tennessee Synod recognized the talents of its first "valuedictorian," Wike was soon ordained and accepted a call to four churches in Shenandoah County, Virginia.⁵⁵

In 1886, with Rev. Prof. R. A. Yoder presiding over Synod, the Committee on Church Institutions reported to the Tennessee Synod:

We, your committee, would respectfully report, that we have had but one paper placed in our hands, from which we gather, that Concordia College, Conover, North Carolina, is in a flourishing condition, having had a larger enrollment of pupils than at any previous session.

Further, we, your committee, recommend:

1. That the Board of Trustees be the only authority, with the sanction of Synod, to elect or employ any of its professors or teachers that are in anywise connected with the said College.
2. That, as the Board of Trustees have the only authority, with the sanction of Synod, to elect teachers, or trustees for said institution, they elect two more members who reside at or near Conover, North Carolina, to be added to the Board of Trustees, so that, in any case of emergency, a quorum may be had for the transaction of business.
3. That the advertisement of Concordia College be printed upon the last page of the cover of our Minutes.⁵⁶

It is unclear whether these recommendations were accepted in total, although the advertisement appeared for a period of years.

The issue of the college location was somewhat aroused at this meeting. The Sisters of Mercy, who had constructed a convent at Hickory, offered its campus and spacious facilities for sale. Synod appointed a committee to investigate, and if possible and advisable, to purchase the property.⁵⁷

By this time, educational work was well under way at Holly Grove, Ilex Post Office, in Davidson County, North Carolina, where Hickory native Rev. J. C. Cline, began teaching in a one-room school house known as the Quinn Place circa 1883. On Christmas day, 1885, a two-story building, a combination school and church, was

52. At this time, J. C. Moser was pastor at St. John's.

53. Monte & Noma Wike, *The Wike Family, Descendants of Jacob M. Weik of North Carolina*, (Colorado City, Texas: 1978), p. 224, cited from Letter from P. C. Wike to Opal Wike Cansler, November 17, 1949.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 226, cited from Letter from P. C. Wike to Grady M. Wike, June 25, 1946.

55. *Ibid.* Eleve, "Commencement-Concordia College," *OCF*, XIV:23, 10 June 1886. In addition to Wike, student participants were J. P. Miller, J. P. Price, Wm. L. Darr, D. M. Moser, J. H. Boyte, Anna Yount, Bessie Yount, and D. J. Carpenter.

56. Henkel, pp. 233, 236-237.

57. "Proceedings of Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XIV:46, 18 November 1886.

dedicated as Holly Grove Academy. The first teacher was Rev. W. P. Cline, who was assisted by Robert L. Fritz in 1887, prior to his ordination.⁵⁸ These two names appear later.

In 1887, Concordia College reported that it was in good condition with an enrollment between 113 and 120. Rev. Prof. J. S. Koerner was elected to continue with theological instruction, "to be reimbursed by the College."⁵⁹ By so doing, the Tennessee Synod reduced its financial commitment to the school, deferring such expenses to "the College."

And thus completed the first decade of Concordia College, and the outlook for its success was indeed bright, with the 1887-1888 enrollment later at 124 students -- from South Carolina, Virginia, and "Indian Territory." The graduation class boasted the names of J. P. Price, D. M. Moser, and S. M. Smith. The "sounds of the hammers of the workmen on the depot are heard early and late" near the center of Conover.⁶⁰

THE FORMATION OF THE PRACTICAL ENGLISH SEMINARY AT HICKORY.

But other Lutherans, possibly observing the actions in Conover, were astir during this period of time, and education was also of primary concern. The second Lutheran congregation at St. John's, with seven other congregations, formerly members of the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized, had joined the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States in 1884, and were placed in the Concordia English District (not to be confused with Concordia College or Concordia Church). These churches included Bethel of Gaston County, Ebenezer, and Luther's Chapel of Lincoln County; Pisgah of Alexander County; and Miller's, Haas's, St. Paul's, and St. John's of Catawba County.

The Concordia District had attempted to form a preparatory school as early as 1880, when its President reported:

That we need a school of a higher grade in our District, to prepare young men for our college, and to give our young people a higher education than they receive in their home schools, and to secure for them a higher Christian scholarship, I think is apparent to many of us.⁶¹

During the summer of 1884, when District President Tressel visited the area, he was approached by two young married men who wished to enter the ministry. Upon appeal to Capital University, although otherwise qualified, they were denied admission because they were unfamiliar with the German language.⁶²

Tressel continued the movement in 1885, when he repeated the pleas for an educated ministry, and stressed the importance of the District's support in the founding of a school.⁶³

The "Ohio" congregation of St. John's was host to the Concordia English District meeting on May 5-10, 1886. During this visit, Tressel was approached by two men who were too old to attend Capital Seminary. After some discussion, the only option was for these men to travel to Baltimore and receive personal instruction under Tressel, which proved impractical.⁶⁴ But on the floor of the District meeting, it was argued that "age and family obligations" precluded aspiring young men from attending the Synod's Seminary, Capital University in Columbus,

58. Davidson County Schools, *Davidson County Schools: A History 1843-1993*, (Clarksville, TN: June 1993), pp. 19-20.

59. Henkel, pp. 239-240. "Educational Advantages of Catawba County," *The Newton Enterprise*, 20 October 1887. "Conover, Concordia College," *OCP*, XIV:51, 23 December 1886.

60. *The Newton Enterprise*, 13 October 1887, 26 January 1888, and 17 May 1888. The number of students was possibly misprinted as 40 in the Enterprise article of 26 January, else the article did not include the primary or parochial students.

61. Gladys Barger, *A History of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hickory, North Carolina*, (1941), p. 16, cited from Golladay, p. 25.

62. *Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Regular Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States Held in Allegheny, PA., from September 5th to September 11th, 1888*, (Columbus, OH, Lutheran Book Concern, 1888), pp. 27-30, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

63. *Minutes of the Ninth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Ev. Luth. Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States Held in the Ev. Luth. Zion's Church, Highland Co., VA, From the 16th to the 21st of September, 1885*, (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1885), pp. 4, 22-23, from the Rev. J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

64. *Ohio Synod Minutes - 1888*, pp. 27-30, cited above.

Ohio. These circumstances led to a logical drive for a local institution of higher learning, in English, for the Concordia District.⁶⁵

At the Joint Synod meeting of that year, in East Saginaw, Michigan, the Concordia District presented a petition for the institution. President Loy's description was:

In this it was vividly portrayed there was a great need for more pastors for the church in West Virginia, North Carolina, etc. It was also stated that, owing to the dearth of pastors, the people of these places had called in vain for help. In order to furnish the necessary laborers for this field, the brethren pray the Synod to establish an English practical seminary at Hickory, North Carolina.⁶⁶

Under this proposal, the families and local churches were to secure building facilities, and the Joint Synod was to furnish teaching support. After several "enthusiastic and feeling speeches," and a committee recommendation, the undertaking received unanimous approval from the floor.⁶⁷

But President Loy recognized the possibility of criticisms:

Probably, too, some outside of our synod will fail to see the need of the movement looking to the establishment of an English Practical Seminary, and especially the need for it where it is proposed to locate it. But our synod may be presumed to know its own wants best, and if any should see fit to find fault with us for endeavoring to meet that want, we must be content to bear it, without allowing ourselves to be deterred from doing the work which we are called to do.⁶⁸

After some consideration of several persons to head the new school, the lot was cast to Rev. G. L. Hunt, pastor of the Ohio congregation at St. John's for the past several years. This decision was surely lauded by the eight Ohio Synod churches in the western piedmont area. Other appointments to serve on the board were Reverend M. L. Carpenter, District President E. L. S. Tressel, and an additional professor who would be over the institution. Lay members on the board included Miller's member L. C. Huffman, Mr. G. A. Dobler, and St. John's member G. A. Brady. Brady served on this Board, often as Secretary, until his death in 1896.⁶⁹

In May of 1887, the recommendations were presented to the Concordia District, where it was resolved, "That we as a District recommend that the Practical Seminary be opened on the first Wednesday of September '87," and "that we recommend to the board of this school that if it at all sees its way clear, it establish, in connection with this school a preparatory department."⁷⁰

Lack of a suitable professor delayed the opening date from September to October 19, 1887, when Reverend E. G. Tressel arrived and began teaching in the home of Mr. J. D. Miller in Hickory. After two weeks, a house was rented for the school. Tressel never fully accepted the professorship, and on November 25, he left the responsibilities with Rev. L. M. Hunt, son of Rev. G. L. Hunt, and the new pastor at St. John's. The younger Hunt, a recent graduate of Capital University, completed the inaugural school year with a student body consisting of a maximum of four students.⁷¹

65. *Ibid.*, cited from Golladay, p. 25.

66. "Synodical Notes-Joint Synod," *Lutheran Standard*, XLIV:42, 23 Oct 1886, (Columbus, OH: 1886), p. 341, hereafter cited as *LS*, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

67. *Ibid.*

68. M. Loy, "Meeting of Joint Synod," *LS*, XLIV:42, p. 340, cited above.

69. Barger, p. 17, cited from Golladay, p. 26. *Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Biennial Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio & Other States, held in Dayton, Ohio, from Sept. 3rd to Sept. 10th, 1896*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1896), p. 37. Rev. D. Simon was originally appointed over the school by the Joint Synod in 1886, but must have declined.

70. Barger, p. 17.

71. "Report and Recommendations of Practical Seminary Board at Hickory, N. C.," *Minutes of the Twenty-Ninth Regular Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States Held in Allegheny, PA., from September 5th to September 11th, 1888*, (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1888), pp. pp. 27-30, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick. The four students were J. L. Kibler, W. M. Kibler, J. M. Senter, and L. J. S. Carpenter.

The seminary curriculum largely followed that of Capital University, with the courses of study based on *Hutter's Compendium of Theology*, *Dietrich's Catechism*, *Loy's Theological Encyclopedia*, *Hart's Rhetoric*, *Loy's Mental Philosophy*, and German.⁷²

Eventually, acquisition of a more suitable building became reality, when Mount St. Joseph's Academy, a Catholic Convent, was purchased for \$6,000, with \$500 down-payment and a \$5,500 promissory note to be paid within one year. It had originally cost in excess of \$12,000, but the prospects of a successful convent and school soon proved dismal "in a town which had not one dozen souls claiming allegiance to Rome." The Catholic organizers, partially due to "aroused prejudice of the community against them," became anxious to sell at a loss, and title was transferred on January 27, 1888.⁷³ This was the same property that the Tennessee Synod had investigated a year or so earlier.

A representative of the Ohio Synod visited soon thereafter, and his congratulatory description of the campus is preserved:

Our object in visiting Hickory was to see the Seminary building that has been purchased from the Roman Catholics for our purposes. The building is large and in good order and situated in the midst of a thirteen acre lot, there is a young orchard, a vineyard, a garden, and a pasture lot besides. There are two good dwelling houses on the lot, one for the resident Professor, and one for the gardener or steward, besides a stable, wagon shed, and other buildings, all in good order. The main building is so arranged that very little if any alterations are needed for our purposes. There is a large hall leading through the building, a large school-room, with several smaller rooms on each side, and on the left side also a very large room that is now used as a chapel, with necessary furniture. The ceiling on the first floor is 15 feet high and on the second floor about 12 feet high. The second floor is divided into sleeping rooms, while the attic above it will answer for storage. One can walk up and out upon the roof from which a splendid view of the surrounding country is commanded; the land thereabout is rolling, and wheat, tobacco, and cotton are the chief products. The climate is mild, very little winter, lasting only about two months, and very seldom snow or ice. . . . Our seminary building is but a few minutes walk from the station, and can be readily seen from a distance. The banker of Hickory, a business man who two years ago moved there from Detroit, Mich., on viewing the seminary and its surroundings said something to this effect, that Roman Catholics do not often give property away, but they came very nearly doing so when they sold that seminary. The banker also stated that he hoped a well educated man with lots of vim and energy might be secured to take hold of the school.⁷⁴

At the District meeting in May 1888, the school prospects were a major topic of interest. First, the \$5,500 note was due on July 15, and the District appealed to the Joint Synod for assistance, and to provide a permanent professor. The people were then pressed to help recruit students, provide with the furnishings, gather provisions for the students, and help by working on the school grounds. The women were requested to help make "bed clothes." Then one member of the committee (possibly L. M. Hunt) made an earnest plea:

We cannot send our young men 1000 miles away to school. The expense of sending 10 students to Columbus and boarding them there would pay the salary of a professor and board those 10 students in Hickory. . . . We need an English School.⁷⁵

This appeal was applauded by a unanimous rising vote!⁷⁶

At the Fall Joint Synod meeting, the Concordia District offered the property to the Synod, with the District assuming the outstanding debt. It appealed for synodical support for professorships. The Synod allocated \$1,000

72. *Ibid.*

73. Barger, pp. 17-19. Golladay, p. 26. H. K. G. Doermann, "St. Paul's English Practical Theological Seminary, Hickory, N. C.," *LS*, LIII:33, 17 August 1895. *Ohio Synod Minutes - 1888*, pp. 27-30, cited above.

74. G. D. S., "Hickory," *LS*, XLVI:20, 19 May 1888, (Columbus, OH: 1888), p. 160, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

75. *Minutes of the Twelfth Annual convention of the Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio, held at St. Michael's Church (Wilfong's), Pendleton Co., W. Va., from May 23 to May 28, 1888*, (Columbus, Ohio, Lutheran Book Concern: 1888), pp. 37-38, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

76. *Ibid.*

for support for a Professor and a beneficiary education fund, and selected Rev. H. K. G. Doermann as professor to the new school.⁷⁷

Doermann declined the call, and M. L. Hunt continued to direct the school during its second year. With approval of the Synod, Hunt instituted a parochial department and an academic department. The parochial department was particularly popular with the local congregations, and its enrollment grew quickly, with a total enrollment advertised at 90 students. The academic department benefited seminary students who were deficient in a particular course or series of instructions.⁷⁸

During the following year, Doermann was again selected to head the school. He accepted the position, assumed his duties in January of 1889, and was formally installed on June 22. On the same day, Practical English Seminary was dedicated into the Lord's service.⁷⁹

The District President's report of 1890 included the following praise of the school:

Our Seminary at Hickory, N. C., together with the Academic department connected with it, are commanding our admiration and joy, deliberate consideration, and united support and encouragement, because of their prosperity and achievements . . .⁸⁰

During that year, Doermann was in charge of the Seminary department; Hunt, the academic department; and newly-hired Prof. S. M. Hamrick, the parochial department. By the 1889-1890 school year, seminary enrollment was 13, and the academy's student list swelled to 76 pupils, but none were from Conover or Newton.⁸¹

Cautious support was echoed by Synod President M. Loy, who stated in his report, "the English Seminary in Hickory is already beginning to bear good fruits,"⁸² which included the graduation of its first two ministers -- J. M. Senter and J. L. Kibler.⁸³

President Doermann's report stated, "The prospects of the seminary are good. The deportment and diligence of the students are praiseworthy. Everything is taught at the seminary which is adapted to the needs of a practical institution, so that the young men who are educated at our English seminary at Hickory, N. C., are well equipped when they enter upon active work."⁸⁴

By 1890, the Practical English Seminary demonstrated signs of prosperity, and local supporters were elated at its prospects.

THE FORMATION OF LENOIR COLLEGE AT HICKORY.

In order to place the foundations of the Catawba County's third Lutheran college into proper perspective, consideration must turn to the previous Tennessee Synod discussions of site location leading to the founding of Concordia College.

Concordia and St. John's Congregations were served by Rev. Prof. J. C. Moser until 1887, when he resigned to accept the parish in Hickory. This was the first of the gradual erosion of influence from the Conover proponents

77. *Ohio Synod Minutes - 1888*, pp. 27-30, cited above.

78. Barger, p. 20. Golladay, pp. 26-27. *The Newton Enterprise*, 22 March 1889. Doermann, *LS*, cited above.

79. *Minutes of the Thirteenth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Ev. Luth. Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, Held in the Bethel Church, Gaston Co., N. C., from the 15th to 20th of May 1889*, (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1889), pp. 5-6, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

80. Barger, p. 20, cited from Golladay, p. 27.

81. *Catalogue of the Educational Institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1890), no page numbers.

82. *Minutes of the Thirtieth Biennial Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Columbus, O., from September 4 to 11, 1890*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1890), p. 9.

83. *Minutes of the Fourteenth Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, Held in St. Peter's Church, Baltimore, Md., from May 7 to May 11, 1890*, (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1890), p. 7, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

84. *Concordia District Minutes - 1890*, pp. 35-36, cited above.

to Hickory. At the yearly meeting. "Favorable action was taken in regard to the endowment of Concordia College, Conover, North Carolina."⁸⁵

Moser also resigned his Professorship at Concordia College, and was replaced by R. A. Yoder. Rosa Yoder also accepted a position as music teacher, and took charge as matron of the eighteen young ladies on campus. D. A. Sox was then the principal of the Preparatory Department, and J. A. Rudisill became a Trustee to replace Yoder. The school was described in "flourishing condition," with a new upright piano and a neat fence surrounding the campus. An appeal went to the Synod for assistance in financing an additional building for the literary societies.⁸⁶

St. John's was temporarily served again by J. M. Smith until December 30, 1888, and Concordia, by J. S. Koiner. Mutual needs of the two congregations, and their mutual support for the Concordia College effort, led to a curious alliance and sequence of events. It was important that any pastor called to serve them be of considerable influence with the Synod, in order to perpetuate the balance between Conover and Hickory. Also, with the resignation of P. C. Henkel from the College's Board of Trustees, a strong, visible, force was needed. In the past history of St. John's and Concordia College, when placed in similar predicaments, a call went to the Henkels. At this point in the nineteenth century, there was a very short supply of Henkels available, so the call went to another prominent Tennessee Lutheran family name -- Stirewalt.

The North Carolina patriarch of this family was Captain John Stirewalt, Sr., of Organ Church in Rowan County. Two of his sons and several of his grandsons became Lutheran Pastors of the Tennessee Synod. His daughter-in-law was Henrietta Henkel, daughter of Paul and sister of David. One of his grand-sons married J. M. Smith's sister, and a grand-daughter married Rev. Christian Moretz. The Stirewalt family was truly a strong Lutheran family which provided many leaders, not unlike the Henkel and Moser families of the nineteenth century.⁸⁷

The decision was made by St. John's and Concordia congregations to tender a joint call to Reverend Jerome Paul Stirewalt, P. C. Henkel's first cousin, who was a pastor in New Market, Virginia. The curious pastoral call proceeded as follows:

Conover, N. C.
Dec 17th 1888

Rev. J. P. Stirewalt
Dear Bro:

At a meeting of Concordia Congregation of the E. L. Church Tennessee Synod held on the 18th Nov. it was unanimously resolved:

First: That we extend to you a unanimous call to become pastor of our church.

Secondly: That we pay you two hundred & fifty dollars per year for your services twice per month as pastor.

Thirdly: That we request you to take charge at the beginning of 1889.

Hoping that you may see your way to accept this Call,

I remain, Yours Resp.

J. Hunsucker,

Sec. Concordia Congregation⁸⁸

Professor Yoder followed this with an encouraging letter of welcome:

Conover, N. C., Dec. 31st, 1888

85. Henkel, p. 243. Patten, no page numbers. *The Newton Enterprise*, 2 February 1888, where Moser was described by a Newton Newspaper as "the popular pastor of the Lutheran Church at this place."

86. *TN Synod Minutes-1888*, pp. 20-22.

87. *David Henkel Diary*, 1827. *Life Sketches*, pp. 206-209. Several family sources indicated the Smith-Stirewalt connection.

88. Letter from Concordia Congregation to J. P. Stirewalt, Dec. 1888, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. Punctuation and capitalization has been added to this and many of the other letters in the Stirewalt collection. Spellings, however, are as seen.

Rev. J. Paul Stirewalt

Dear Bro:

I learn that a call has been extended to you for your services as pastor of Concordia Congregation this place; and I also learn that on yesterday St. John's cong. about 2-1/2 or 3 miles from here also elected you to serve them. Now I hope you will give these calls your prayerful consideration; and if possible accept the work. Both the congregations have been divided on the subject of a pastor for a year; and as a consequence our congregation here has been declining. There is a good deal of earnest work necessary right here. The cong. should at once go to work and build a house of worship. We ought to have a model congregation here at our school to encourage the students as they are here most of the year.

I do hope you will be able to see your way clear to accept the work here. There are a number of pastors here, but the congregations can not unite on any one of them. I have been called to the work here twice in the past years, but could not accept on account of having as much on my hands as I can possibly do. We will certainly extend to you a hearty welcome should you come to Conover.

Hoping that you may soon decide to come to this part of the Lord's Vineyard to labor. I am

Your Fraternally,

R. A. Yoder⁸⁹

Then the letter from St. John's was received:

Conover, Ca. Co. N. C.

Rev. J. P. Stirewalt

Dear Sir -- As we have elected you for our Pastor for St. John's Congregation with almost a unanimous vote -- The members present agreed to raise \$150.00 a year for your services twice a month -- If you agree to come let us know soon

Yours Truly

P. P. Hoke, Sec.

Rec. Jan. 2, 1889.90

Evidently, Stirewalt did not recognize these as one and the same call or found them somewhat irregular, and the following letter was soon posted:

Conover, N. C. Jan 14th 1889

Rev. J. Paul Stirewalt

New Market Va.

Dear Sir

Your favor of recent date recd also your letter to St. John's Congregation is before me in which you stated that you should have to decline the Call to St. Johns Congregation partly for the reason that it was not stated that it was to be in connection with the Call from Concordia Congregation. I am authorized by the Church Council of St. Johns to say that the instructions to the Sec. when making the call was to have as so stated but did not do so thinking that you was aware of that fact from other correspondence which had passed through some other parties and yourself.

I am also authorized to state from our Congregation (Concordia) that such was the intention when our vote was taken but that St. Johns had not acted and we could not so advise you until they had acted and as they have been slow to come to their conclusions we decided to send in our action that you might have the same under consideration until St. Johns would take some action.

89. Letter from R. A. Yoder to J. P. Stirewalt, Dec. 1888, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

90. Letter from St. John's Congregation to J. P. Stirewalt, Jan 2, 1889, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

Now I will here State by authority of the Council of both (St. Johns and Concordia) that the calls of both are with the direct understanding that they are to be considered as forming one pastorate and that you will consider your decision accordingly.

I will further say that your letter to me did not impose such language as we take it to be a non-acceptance of our Call. If you so intended it we never put that constriction upon it and have been waiting for your decision.

Hoping that the above explanation will be satisfactory and that you may through the guidance of the Good Lord to see your way clear to accept the same.

I remain

Yours Truly

J. Hunsucker, Sec.91

Likely, there was a professorial position available also. However, Stirewalt declined, and the two Churches were forced to look elsewhere. After an extremely thoughtful and persistent attempt, no additional synodical influence was garnered for the congregations or the College. Eventually, St. John's secured the services of Rev. C. H. Bernheim, who began his service in 1889.⁹²

In late spring, an unsuccessful call for professorship went from the College to Prof. W. P. Cline, formerly of Catawba College, and later, of Holly Grove Academy and chairman of the Davidson County Board of Education. If a local pastorate was incorporated into this call, it is not known, but as Concordia was without a Pastor, it is likely.⁹³ Concordia remained without a regular pastor until Rev. John George Schaid, former President of Mt. Pleasant College, accepted a professorship at Concordia College, and moved to Conover in August 1889.⁹⁴

At the 1889 Tennessee Synod meeting, Reports from "Literary Institutions" was gratifying. R. A. Yoder replaced the resigned J. S. Koiner as theological professor, and a building committee (or fund-raising committee), consisting of W. P. Cline, J. F. Moser, P. C. Wike, A. M. Huit, and Jonas Hunsucker, was announced to raise \$10,000 for building construction. This was conditional on \$2,500 being pledged by citizens of Conover and the surrounding community within three miles (Concordia, St. John's, Old St. Paul's, and St. Timothy). On December 24, Cline made a widely-publicized and successful fund-raising address on education at the College.⁹⁵ He stressed:

No college can expect to succeed in this age, without suitable buildings. The age of frame buildings for colleges is fast passing away, and if we mean to command the respect of even our own young men and women, we must endeavor to get a better home for our college, than the one it now occupies. . . . If there are any yet who have some feeling against this school, we have this to say, the best thing that can be done for old sores, is to let them get well. Apply the oil of forgiveness, and let us move together.⁹⁶

He reported to Synod that \$2,635 was raised from a nucleus of Concordia and St. John's members living near Conover, with R. A. Yoder and Jonas Hunsucker kicking off this effort by their generous subscriptions of \$250 each. Conover had met its obligation, and the surrounding area had not yet been approached. By June of 1890, a total of \$4,497 had been raised, with the major donations being from the Catawba County congregations. A fund raiser through part of Virginia collected an additional \$2,263 in support, and achievement of the \$10,000 goal appeared promising.⁹⁷

Enrollment during the spring term was 105, and the entire 1888-1889 catalog listed 162 students. Commencement exercises of 1889 were witnessed by "overflowing" crowds, although many were irritated afterwards, when they "had the misfortune to have their buggy harness entirely destroyed by some persons cutting them to pieces with knives during the exercises."⁹⁸

91. Letter from Concordia Congregation to J. P. Stirewalt, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

92. CB1.

93. *The Newton Enterprise*, 14 June 1889.

94. *The Newton Enterprise*, 2 August 1889.

95. *The Newton Enterprise*, 20 December 1889. J. P. Stirewalt, "Proceedings of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XVII:47, 20 November 1889.

96. W. P. Cline, "Concordia College," *OCF*, XVIII:9, 5 March 1890.

97. Various fund-raising reports appeared in *OCF*, XVIII, Nos. 2, 9, 22, 23, 26, & 30.

98. Henkel, pp. 250-251. *The Newton Enterprise* listed spring enrollment on 22 March 1889, and mentioned the catalog on 24 May 1889; Mr. A.

All indications and reports were that Concordia College was in a very prosperous condition (except for the damaged harnesses) with enrollment of 130 students.⁹⁹ However, during this period, Pastor Stirewalt's respectful decline to accept a call, and two untimely deaths changed the College's outlook immeasurably.

On September 26, 1889, Dr. P. C. Henkel slept with his fathers. His funeral was held two days later at the site of his first sermon, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, and the service was conducted by Reverend J. M. Smith. At the 1889 Tennessee Synod meeting, several resolutions were made regarding the death of Reverend P. C. Henkel, D. D.. Reading his obituary is like reading a "who's who" at St. John's in the nineteenth century, and further comment would understate the importance of this man relative to the Lutheran Church of North Carolina. When his remains were placed at the earthly resting place, much of the driving spirit and influence behind Concordia College, without similar replacement, accompanied them.¹⁰⁰

Col. Walter W. Lenoir passed away in July 1890, and attorney J. G. Hall sought to carry out Lenoir's wishes relative to the land donation for a Protestant College. His inquiries fell on the ears of Rev. A. L. Crouse, who was then in charge of two congregations near Hickory, and serving as Professor at Concordia College. Crouse lived directly across the street on the western edge of the Lenoir property, and he likely crossed the tract, and gazed at its Highland Academy building daily, in his ten mile trek to and from Conover.¹⁰¹

Another influential Pastor who was interested in the Hickory site was M. L. Little of Gaston Female College. The third institution of Lutheran higher education can attribute much of its early success to a grandson of the Lutheran congregation of St. John's. When Rev. M. L. Little became its director in 1882, its fortunes improved drastically. By 1886, the co-educational institution at Dallas obtained college status, and had boasted enrollments as high as 215 students, many of whom were from outside the local area. By 1889, Gaston College became Gaston Female College, and M. L. Little was making pleas for support from the Tennessee Synod, by suggesting that his school become the Synod's female institution, with Concordia limiting itself to male students. Repeated queries gained no support from Synod leaders, which at that time were located around Conover.¹⁰² Although both institutions were successful for many years, failure of Concordia's Trustees and the Tennessee Synod to compromise on the Gaston College issue managed to alienate the Lutheran supporters of Gaston from the Conover location. This is obvious from a letter from Little to Pastor John A. Rudisill, Concordia Trustee:

I don't really know what to think of the attitude of the brethren towards our school. It does certainly not savor of the spirit of Christ and of our Christian faith and love. How it is that any one school must take precedence of all others, and claim to have the prerogative to do the educational work of the Church and the world, is a question too hard for me to solve.¹⁰³

In a later letter, Little insinuated that Concordia College was holding itself very aloof from him.

I suppose you are making ready to go to Conover to Commencement. I would like to be there, but I cannot go this year, especially without an invitation -- a thing I have never received from the school or any member of the faculty to my recollection, though I invariably give them a personal invitation and solicitation to come to ours every year.¹⁰⁴

When the Walter W. Lenoir offer re-surfaced, Pastor Little "at once recognized the desirability of the Tennessee Synod's acceptance of the offer and openly advocated in the face of a restricted opposition the removal of Concordia College to Hickory." He believed that there would eventually be "a consolidation of the schools within the Synod, and that by concentrated efforts and a welding of interest on the school question, harmony

M. Huit had been elected State Representative, 8 February 1889; the buggy harness incident is found on 31 May 1889. Perhaps coincidentally, \$10,000 was precisely the amount of money needed to secure the W. W. Lenoir property in Hickory.

99. *Situation*, p. 8. *Review*, p. 7.

100. Henkel, pp. 253-255.

101. Voight, pp. 26-27.

102. Little, pp. 5-7.

103. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

104. *Ibid.*

among the members of Synod could be restored and a college of strong and commanding power second to none in the South could be built up for our Lutheran Church."105

Crouse discussed the Lenoir land proposal with J. C. Moser, who was now also in Hickory. At the 1890 Synod meeting, Crouse and Moser held private discussions with Concordia Professor Yoder and Synod President W. P. Cline.106 The early conversations with Yoder met with his disapproval of college relocation. "Considerable money gathered from members and congregations of our church had been spent in Conover. A canvass had been made for funds for a new building. The Synod had formally accepted the location at Conover and chiefly because of the agitation and bitterness that would surely follow . . ." Attorney Hall made his land offer to the Tennessee Synod through Crouse and Moser.107

On November 5, Yoder met with Crouse and Moser in Hickory, and soon thereafter, word leaked that Concordia's professors were conversing with the Hickory party. Rev. C. H. Bernheim and another Trustee confronted Yoder at his home, "in reference to the 'Rebellion' in College." One can imagine the tone of voice that occurred during this encounter. "Before the end of November Yoder had become a convert to moving the college to Hickory."108

The frequency of such discussions increased, as on November 17, 1890, in preparation for the upcoming Synod meeting, Rev. Crouse approached the Board of Trustees, including J. M. Smith and President Yoder. He repeated his argument in favor of the Lenoir property, and the Board once again denied his pleas.109

The North Carolina Conference of the Tennessee Synod held its regular meeting at Friendship Church, Alexander County, on November 27-30, 1890, with Yoder as Conference President. A large number of area pastors and delegates was present, with P. L. Yount and Pastor Bernheim representing St. John's. The important subjects for Friday's discussion were "Altar and Pulpit Fellowship and Church Discipline," but these were never reached, as the Lenoir property proposition was formally presented. The two-day discussion that followed was described as "somewhat stormy," and did not, "in a spiritual point of view," benefit the congregation of Friendship. A motion was carried by a majority of three votes, that a called meeting of the Tennessee Synod be held to settle the college location issue. Prior to adjournment, the subject of the called meeting again reached the floor, where the previous action was sustained by a margin of six votes.110

President of Synod and Fund-Raising Chairman, W. P. Cline, had become convinced that the Hickory location was more desirable, furthering the erosion towards Hickory. Cline wrote a long letter to Yoder that virtually convinced him to opt for the Hickory location.111

On December 2, Yoder was unsuccessful in "persuading a mass meeting of the citizens of Conover to accept the proposition to move the college."112

Seeing the handwriting on the wall, the Conover party got nervous to the point that Bernheim wrote a letter to Rev. E. L. S. Tressel, of the Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio, to inquire whether that Synod was interested in acquiring Concordia College. Bernheim suggested that some other arrangement might be "forced to be made" regarding Concordia. Tressel's response is not known, but it does not seem likely that the Ohio Synod would have wanted a second institution in Catawba County. When the letter to Tressel surfaced, other Concordia Trustees discounted it as the individual action of Bernheim, and not an official action of the Board of Trustees -- many of whom painfully remembered how the Ohio Synod came to North Carolina in the first

105. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

106. Wight, p. 36, cited from *History of the Founding of Lenoir College*. Patten, no page numbers. Little, p. 8.

107. Wight, pp. 37-39.

108. Voight, p. 29. Wight, pp. 39-40. James T. Miller, in *The History of St. Timothy Congregation*, states: "It was said that Rev. C. H. Bernheim was the very man that caused them to leave and go to Hickory."

109. *Situation*, p. 8. Wight, p. 43.

110. A. L. Crouse, *Historical Sketches of Alexander County, North Carolina; Friendship Lutheran Church; etc.*, (1905), p. 28. Transcr. by Historical Reprints, Rt. 6, Box 77, Taylorsville, N. C., p. 17. Note that the author of this pamphlet was one of the primary proponents of the Hickory site. Wight, p. 43. "Conference," *OCF*, XVIII:48, 3 December 1890. "Proceedings of the North Carolina Conference," *OCF*, XVIII:50, 17 December 1890.

111. Voight, p. 29; cited from Wight, p. 40.

112. Wight, p. 44, cited from Yoder Diary.

place.¹¹³ At a Trustee meeting on December 18, 1890, it was resolved to offer the property of Concordia College to the Tennessee Synod.¹¹⁴

The special session was scheduled by Synod President Cline for December 26 at St. James Church, just south of Newton, and the official notice was published on December 10 in *Our Church Paper*. This gave the pastors from Virginia little time to re-schedule their holiday appointments in order to attend. Their congregations were often unable to schedule a business meeting for selection of delegates. And finally, their pastors were required to spend Christmas day on a train, instead of with their families and congregations. The notice stated the intent of the meeting as consideration of the Lenoir proposal. The meeting's true intention -- moving the college to Hickory -- was not publicly advertised.¹¹⁵

A low turnout was virtually guaranteed, especially after the "White Christmas" due to a heavy sleet storm. On the appointed date, seventeen of the twenty Pastors from North Carolina were present, and only one from out-of-state. Only 42 out of a possible 109 lay delegates were present, with three from South Carolina and none from Virginia. Delegate F. J. Dellinger would have plenty to report when he returned to St. John's.¹¹⁶

At the beginning of the meeting, the Hickory party attempted to secure unity, by encouraging each pastor and delegate to pledge support toward the ultimate decision of Synod regarding location of the college. "The Conover pastors refused to pledge themselves; and . . . we [Hickory] could not pledge unless all present would do so."¹¹⁷ Neither side would be the first to pledge unity, and a stalemate prevailed.

Items under discussion were acquiring the Lenoir property, acquiring the Concordia College property, and the feasibility of the Synod's incorporation, which would permit legal ownership. President W. P. Cline offered these proposals without recommendation.¹¹⁸

If there was any "peace on earth" or "good will to men" during this holiday season, it was not to be found at St. James' Church. In what was truly believed by many to be a compromise, A. L. Crouse entered a carefully-worded motion to accept both properties, and move the college to Hickory.

Resolved, That we accept the offer made by Mr. Hall, and use said property for our college, with its theological department.

2. That we accept the offer made us by the board of the property in the town of Conover, provide for the improvement of and addition to it, and the establishment of a home for the needy orphans of the Lutheran Church, and the perpetuation of a good academical school, upon the basis adopted by the original founders of said school.

3. That, in view of his untiring zeal and almost unequalled success in the propagation and defense of the pure doctrines of the Church, and especially that of infant church membership, thus making him pre-eminently the spiritual patron of the children, our institution at Conover be known as the P. C. HENKEL ORPHAN HOME AND ACADEMY, a living and useful memorial to the worth of him whose name it shall thus bear, and that our college retain its present name.

4. That both these institutions be controlled by the same board of directors, whose members shall all be members of our Synod, with the specified life-time exception of Mr. J. G. Hall.

5. That, with devout gratitude, we recognize, in our opportunities, the gracious provision of our heavenly Father, enabling us to begin to meet our responsibilities to the orphans, as well as to the youth of our dear old Synod.¹¹⁹

The eruption was considerable! Pastor Bernheim "jumped up and with his face as red as a turkey's shouted, 'If we can't have the tablecloth, we'll not take the dishrag.'" Another stated later, he "had had the shock of his life when supposedly Christian ministers could hand it out to each other as they did at that meeting."¹²⁰

113. *Situation*, p. 12. *Review*, pp. 9-10. *Situation-OCP*, in which Yoder states (without documentation) that perhaps Bernheim attempted to "give away the school" but did not "deliver the goods," because Ohio did not want the property. This issue is carefully clouded by all parties. This author believes that, as Hickory supporters, including Yoder himself, were on the Board of Trustees at this time, had any such action been authorized by the Board, Yoder would have known of it, listed his source, and published it without conjecture.

114. Wight, p. 44.

115. *Situation*, p. 8. "Notice--Called Session of Tenn. Synod," *OCP*, XVIII:49, 10 December 1890.

116. Voigt, p. 31, partially cited from Wight, p. 44. "Call Session of the E. L. Tennessee Synod," *OCP*, XIX:3, 21 January 1891. *J. C. Moser Journal #1* - 1890, mentioned the sleet storm. Moser apparently did not attend the meeting.

117. *Situation-OCP*.

118. *Minutes of the Called Session of the Tennessee Synod*, p. 43. Wight, pp. 44-45.

119. *Review*, p. 8.

The Hickory proponents immediately offered a motion "to refer the consideration of acceptance to a committee of five disinterested and unbiased men of the Church, to whom all advantages and arguments of a proper character should be submitted."¹²¹

Senior Pastor J. R. Peterson, who was serving in the Gaston County area, asked Yoder, "whether the school could not be made a success at Conover." To which, Yoder replied, "That if synod would unite on that place, the school could be made a success at Conover." The Conover proponents immediately shouted, "Question, question."¹²² After two days of wrangling had been consumed in discussing the proposition, Conover men offered a substitute motion to keep the school at Conover, and this motion was carried.¹²³ A substitute motion, under parliamentary procedure, must be voted on instead of the motion on the floor. As the substitute motion was passed by a majority (31-3, or 31-29 with the 26 abstainers counted as "nay" votes), the original motion required no further action, and thereby, the college remained in Conover by majority vote, but with anything but whole-hearted endorsement. Yoder later accused the Conover supporters of forcing "a vote under 'gag-law,'" yet others stated that the abstaining votes were split between Conover and Hickory.¹²⁴

Although the Synod did not accept the Hickory proposal at that time, the gradual erosion of influence turned into a landslide. On December 30, Yoder tendered his resignation to the Board of Trustees, and on January 27, it was accepted pending completion of the school year.¹²⁵ One more large nail was squarely driven in Concordia College's coffin.

On January 13, 1891, the Board of Trustees voted to allow the congregations to vote on the location of the College. Trustees preferring both Conover and Hickory agreed, and assigned a committee to write the advantages of each location and to present them to the January 27th meeting. At that meeting, Smith and Bernheim changed their opinion as to the advisability of congregational vote.¹²⁶

By February 3, the Hickory group organized the "Augsburg School Association," and approached Mr. Hall about obtaining the Lenoir property. Hall rejected these advances, as he preferred to work with the Tennessee Synod, and not a group of "dissenters."¹²⁷

Two weeks later, another Augsburg meeting was unexpectedly disrupted. At about 5:00 P. M., on Monday, February 16, 1891, a train wreck occurred on the C. & L. N. G. railroad connecting Hickory with Gaston County. The disaster occurred approximately two and one-half miles from Newton, on a 35 foot-high trestle near Smyre's mill. Many were wounded, and seven were killed, including **Rev. Marcus Lafayette Little**.¹²⁸

After the accident, Pastor Little, who was baptized and had previously preached an occasional sermon at St. John's, was unconscious and never spoke a word for about eighteen hours, when he succumbed to head injuries about 10:00 A. M., on February 17, 1891.¹²⁹

120. Patten, no page numbers; Voight, p. 33; cited from R. L. Fritz, Sr. in private conversation with writer in Hickory, December 30, 1949. Fritz was a lay delegate at this meeting representing his congregation from Holly Grove, NC.

121. *Situation*, p. 9.

122. Voight, p. 34, cited from Wight. *Situation-OCP*.

123. C. O. Smith, *History of the Missouri Synod Into North Carolina*, (Concordia, St. Louis: 1933), p. 7. Hereinafter referenced, *Smith-Missouri*.

124. *Situation*, pp. 10-11. Yoder listed the names of thirteen pastors in favor of the Hickory site and who stood in objection to the St. James meeting: A. L. Crouse, M. L. Little, J. C. Moser, R. A. Yoder, D. A. Goodman, W. P. Cline, D. J. Settlemire, J. A. Rudisill, R. H. Cline, D. I. Offman, J. P. Miller, Jacob Wike, and R. L. Fritz. *Review*, pp. 7-9. Namrah, "Concordia College to Remain at Conover," *The Newton Enterprise*, 9 Jan 1891.

125. Wight, pp. 49-50, cited from Yoder Diary. *Situation-OCP*, confirms the dates and notes that the resignation was accepted at the regular Trustee meeting.

126. *Situation*, pp. 10-11. *Review*, p. 10, states the reason for declining the congregational vote as doing so was contrary to the vote of Synod at the previous meeting. *Situation-OCP*, cites the reason as "they were afraid that the majority would be against Conover."

127. Wight, p. 50, cited from *The History of the Founding of Lenoir College*.

128. "Great Wreck on C. & L., A Freight Jumps A Trestle Thirty-Five Feet High, 7 Killed-Many Wounded. The Rev. M. L. Little Dies," *Press and Carolinian*, 19 February 1891. Others killed were John Hogge (fireman), W. W. Ross, (Cornwallis, SC), J. B. Cornwalls (flagman, Cornwallis, SC), J. B. Cornwall (brakesman, Chester, SC), R. L. Johnson (harness maker of Gastonia), and Wash Williams.

129. R. A. Yoder, "Obituary," *Press and Carolinian*, 26 February 1891.

His funeral served to be a brief moment of solemnity in the Conover and Hickory College rivalry. Little's pall-bearer's included A. L. Crouse, J. C. Moser, R. A. Yoder, J. P. Miller, and others, and consoling remarks were made by these Pastors. The actual funeral address was delivered by Little's cousin, theological teacher, and one of the deceased's staunchest, college-location opponents, Rev. J. M. Smith.¹³⁰

Soon thereafter, the college controversy was back to normal. On March 24, Yoder received two letters, encouraging him to resume conversations with Hall. The Hickory group met on March 30 with Hall and Hickory businessmen S. E. Killian and W. P. Huffman, and it was stipulated that \$10,000 cash for initial improvements must be raised by January 1, 1892. The Lenoir property transaction was completed on April 21, with knowledge of Tennessee Synod leaders. At this meeting, Yoder was elected President of Highland Academy, and thus served as president of two Lutheran schools in Catawba County simultaneously. Later, Hall accepted personal notes from Yoder, Cline, Crouse and Moser, thereby proving their commitment to the Hickory location by placing their individual financial well-beings at stake in the new venture.¹³¹

An announcement was soon distributed that Highland College would be opened in September.

When the announcement was made on May 1, that Highland College would be opened in September, the fires of passion created over the school question were fanned into fiercer flame. The feeling in Conover became especially intense against those of the faculty and of the student body who would go to Hickory. On May 8 feeling had reached such a pitch that part of the student body departed. On May 11 Yoder "rang the bell for school but no one came," although it was still several weeks ahead of the date set in the school calendar.¹³²

The Newton Enterprise reported this story accordingly:

Conover and Newton are to be married soon if nothing breaks up the match, and converted into the biggest town in Western North Carolina, would it not be a mistake . . . to move the college from its present location? . . . The disagreement will doubtless result in two schools, one at Hickory and one at Conover.¹³³

"Finally, in the spring of 1891, two or three weeks before the close of the year's work, the faculty of the college pulled down the blinds, locked the doors, and announced to the students that school was out and that they might go home to come back next year—not to Conover, but to Hickory." Thus the student body was reduced by 21 in one fell swoop.¹³⁴ Also gone were Rev. R. A. Yoder, President, Professor of Psychology and Natural Sciences; A. L. Crouse, Professor of Theology; Rev. J. P. Miller, Professor of Greek and English; Mr. R. L. Fritz, Instructor of Mathematics in his senior year of classes; Mrs. R. A. Yoder, Teacher of Music; J. C. Moser, Trustee; and Rev. W. P. Cline, chairman of Concordia's finance committee.

Perhaps, the gloomy situation at Concordia College is best described by Pastor M. J. Stirewalt, who was invited to deliver that year's baccalaureate sermon at Concordia College's commencement exercises, and who wrote to his cousin on May 16th, 1891:

I am enjoying my visit here very much aside from the sad state of affairs I find here among the ministers arising out of the attempt to move the school from this place to Hickory. The School here is bursted—exercises closed—students gone home—next week commencement—and no school here—and the friends of the school disgusted and mortified. The attempt to move the school from this place is a silly, foolish thing, and will result in the ruin of the Synod's School—if persisted in. I am surprised beyond measure at the course of the leaders of the movement. But perhaps you think it is none of my funeral, and so I desist. Enclosed I send you "Highland College" on paper.

When I came here I was invited to preach the baccalaureate sermon before the School. I accepted the invitation. Tomorrow is the day—but as there is no school here I shall not back a laureate.

This whole disaster—I mean this school trouble here—is a shame and disgrace to the Church of the Tennessee Synod.¹³⁵

130. *Ibid.* J. M. Smith Diary - 1891.

131. Norris & Boatmon, pp. 14-15. Wight, pp. 50-51.

132. Wight, p. 52.

133. *Ibid.*

134. *Smith-Missouri*, p. 7. *Review*, p. 12. Patten, no page numbers. Norris and Boatmon, p. 14.

135. Letter from M. J. Stirewalt to J. P. Stirewalt, May 16, 1891, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. Enclosed with the letter was the first brochure from "Highland College."

Yoder, although apparently reluctant to relocate, moved his disgruntled wife and his house and elm trees, from Conover to a location adjacent to the Lenoir property in Hickory. Local legend recalls his disillusion, that "he'd have moved his well if he could have"!136

Therefore, the foundation of the Tennessee Lutheran college in Hickory, Highland Academy, resulted from disagreements founded around the College in Conover. Its name was soon changed to Lenoir College, after the original land benefactor, and later to Lenoir-Rhyne. It opened its doors on September 1, 1891, its first year boasted a total enrollment of 149, and its outlook was promising.137

The outlook at Practical English Seminary appeared stable at the beginning of the 1891-1892 school year, with about the same enrollment in its Seminary Department as the year before.

During the summer of 1891, the future of Concordia College appeared non-existent.

I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go; keep her; for she is thy life. Proverbs 4 11,13.

136. Norris & Boatman, p. 142. Patten, no page numbers.

137. Norris and Boatman, pp. 14-15.

Chapter 10

THE "BURNT DISTRICT"

Devise not evil against thy neighbor, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee. Proverbs 3:29.

The local, and not-so-local, press reported the Lutheran college controversy and the advertisement by Highland Academy. *The Dallas Eagle* of Gaston County printed the following in May of 1891:

Concordia College at Conover adjourned, last week sine die, without any commencement or anything of the kind. Trouble over the removal of the college to Hickory was the cause. All the Professors have resigned and will take charge of the Hickory school next term. This will virtually amount to removal of the college to this place. The Tenn. Synod is now without any school but, we think, Highland will be ready for its adoption by its next meeting. The faculty of Highland is a strong one and the school is likely to be a prosperous and successful one--The first term of Highland begins September 1st, 1891.¹

On May 21, Hickory's *Press and Carolinian* repeated this article verbatim under the headline. "We Go From Home to Hear the News." In its next issue, Concordia replied to this portrayal of the situation:

1. The college has not adjourned sine die, that we know of. Nobody could do that but the Synod and Board of Directors. After vacation, business is to be resumed at the old stand.
2. All the professors have gone to Hickory. Two of the college professors and the theological professor are on the list of the Hickory family; but they are not all, though too large a part, perhaps.
3. The students have gone home. But they always go, for vacation. I deeply regret the whole thing. But I hope and pray that God will overrule it all for good; and that the good sense of our people, their Christian spirit and loyalty to truth and right will not only keep them from erring in the matter, but will enable them to find that path wherein we can all walk and be agreed. J. G. Schaid.²

In the same issue, the *Press and Carolinian* repeated an article published in the *Gastonia Gazette*, which stated that, "The school formerly conducted at Conover will be moved to Hickory where it will assume the name Highland College."³ Quite possibly, the Hickory supporters and professors truly believed they had moved the school.

THE COMING OF MISSOURI

The remaining Concordia College Trustees (some Trustees were now Hickory supporters) were determined, but were faced with finding suitable professors for the upcoming year without help of Synod, and in direct opposition to many synod leaders now laboring in Hickory. H. A. Herman and James T. Miller, of the recently-formed St. Timothy congregation, were elected to the Board of Trustees. The public was being convinced that Concordia College no longer existed, and much of Concordia's student body was depleted.⁴

The Tennessee Synod, in its 1883 resolution with the Concordia College Trustees stated, "whenever a vacancy or vacancies, occur . . . in the faculty, the said Synod shall have the right as well as the privilege to recommend a suitable person, or persons, to fill such a vacancy or vacancies." This followed with, "provided, that if the Synod shall fail, after notice, to recommend, in due time, a suitable person or persons to fill such vacancy or

1. *Press and Carolinian*, "We Go From Home to Hear the News," May 21, 1891, p. 5, reprinted from the "Dallas Eagle."

2. *Press and Carolinian*, "Rev. J. G. Schaid Speaks," May 28, 1891, p. 5.

3. *Press and Carolinian*, "Miss Sallie Smyre Engaged," May 28, 1891, p. 8; reprinted from *Gastonia Gazette*.

4. James T. Miller, *The History of St. Timothy Congregation*, typescript, p. 2. The author was one of the new Trustee Members of Concordia.



Concordia College, Conover, NC
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vacancies, the proper authorities of said institution, shall proceed to fill such vacancy or vacancies."⁵

The State Charter of Concordia College charged the Trustees to "elect a President and professors to teach in this institution and remove them for good cause."⁶

The Tennessee Synod did not make a single appointment or recommendation for Trustee, President, Professor, or Teacher to Concordia College, prior to the 1891-1892 school year. Quite possibly, Synod leaders were still expecting the Conover group to acquiesce, accept the offer of the "P. C. Henkel Orphan Home and Academy," or issue a formal request which could lay dormant until the fall session of Synod. Synod leaders had apparently forgotten the determination exhibited about fifteen years earlier -- that obtained the property, raised about \$4,000 for construction of the Main Building, again raised about \$1,000 a few years later for a dormitory, had recently raised nearly \$7,000 in pledges, and hired and paid for faculty for many years -- without a single assurance of getting one cent from the Tennessee Synod.

Under emergency conditions, Concordia Trustees hired Marshall H. Yount, of Conover, and Charles L. Coon, two former graduates, for the next school year, with the realization that the College's future was dismal without some outside support. They also went to work on the facilities, by remodeling the dormitory and painting the College building. The college then opened in 1891 with 80 students. These two young men proved satisfactory to keep the college in operation for the 1891-1892 sessions, and both became very successful in later years. Yount became a successful attorney, the Mayor of Hickory, and in 1907-1908, he served Catawba County in the North Carolina House of Representatives. Coon later became Superintendent of Schools in Wilson County, and was highly regarded by his peers for his education acumen and the advancement of the public education system in North Carolina.⁷

When Concordia announced that it was "decidedly the best opening the college has ever had," R. A. Yoder published that this was not true, that the year 1888 had a larger enrollment of 90, and that Highland College was now in session with 82 students.⁸ The friction between the two colleges was now in print, and being broadcast to a large Lutheran subscription outside Catawba County.

Meanwhile, the Hickory school founders were working behind the synodical scenes to wrest the complete support of the Tennessee Synod from Conover:

Postmark: Aug. 23, 1891

I hope your brethren will see the school matter in the right way and not let our synod loose the best thing ever offered to us. . . . God has blessed you with considerable property. How much will you help us in this work? . . . Try it with me in this enterprise and see if my experience is not a happy one. . . . I doubt the propriety of trying to settle the college question at Synod this fall. Let it alone and it will settle itself in another year. A few young men are trying to run Concordia College at Conover. Rev. J. F. Moser claims to be president of the concern elected by a faction of the board living in Conover. I learned they had opened with 60 or more students made up principally of primary pupils of the locality-the motive outgrowth of the stir on the subject of the removal. 6 weeks from now a very large percent of these students will be in the cotton field. It will take a little time for this to blow over. . . . As soon as the people take a sober view of the matter they will readily see that there cannot be any thing like a school of any respectful grade in our Church in N. C. without the cooperation of our element in this division. It is folly for the synod to put up Bernheim as a leader which would be done if the synod maintains Conover. . . . If we succeed and the Synod should desire to take the school, she will find us ready to cooperate with her.⁹

At the October Synod meeting of 1891, the four Highland College founders might have come under the censure of the Synod for acting contrary to the previous year's vote. This did not occur, and instead, J. J. George,

5. Henkel, p. 223.

6. "The Charter of Concordia College, Conover, N. C.," *TLW*; XII:12, 4 June 1903, pp. 91-92.

7. Patten, no page numbers. Voight, pp. 36-37, cited from Wight, p. 53. "Conover Items," *The News Enterprise*, 28 Aug 1891. Cheney, p. 1091.

8. R. A. Yoder, "Let the Facts be Fairly Stated," *OCP*, XIX:38, 23 September 1891.

9. Letter from W. P. Cline to J. P. Stirewalt, August 23, 1891, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. J. F. Moser (J. C. Moser's brother) had been professor during the late 1880's. He crushed his hand in a cane mill as a boy, and had been bothered by this affliction. In January 1889, he bravely traveled to Salisbury, and had his hand successfully amputated just above the wrist [*The Newton Enterprise*, 24 January 1889]. This is the only citation seen where J. F. Moser is named as being President of the College, as college records cannot be found for this year.

S. S. Keisler, and T. J. Craps received financial assistance from Synod, and were directed to attend Highland College instead of Concordia. The President of Concordia College reported "that the Professor of Theology elected by last year's Synod, is not at his post, and that place is now vacant." The Tennessee Synod took no action to fill the position, and therefore failed to exercise its "right" and "privilege" of recommending professors to the College.¹⁰

The founders of Highland College were pleased, and R. A. Yoder's Diary entry for that date stated, "We at Hickory got all we asked of Synod."¹¹

The remaining Concordia Trustees who supported Conover, without action from the Tennessee Synod, then considered an appeal to the Missouri Synod for assistance. Early relations between the Tennessee Synod and the German Missouri Synod are found in 1848, when a resolution praising Missouri's formation was adopted. In a letter submitted from Missouri to Tennessee as early as 1853:

We take the liberty, . . . to address your reverend body by these few lines, assuring you of our fraternal love and sympathy, founded upon the conviction, that it is one and the same faith which dwells in you and in us. We are highly rejoiced in this vast desert and wilderness, to meet a whole Lutheran Synod steadfastly holding to the precious Confessions of our beloved church, . . . Our synod . . . desires, however separated from you by different language and local interests, to co-operate with you, hand in hand, in rebuilding the walls of our dilapidated Zion.¹²

This respect was reciprocated, when in 1854, the Tennessee Synod resolved: "That we will endeavor to cultivate a more intimate acquaintance and a closer union with the Missouri Synod."¹³

The two synods had regularly and willingly exchanged corresponding or advisory members at their annual meetings. During Dr. Henkel's seven year tenure in Missouri, he created strong ties with that area and its pastorate. Henkel and J. R. Moser submitted a letter to the 1872 Tennessee Synod meeting, informing them of the measures taken for organization of an English conference in Missouri. The Synod enthusiastically resolved the following:

1. That we hail with pleasure this information.
2. That their efforts put forth for the organization of a Synod, meet our approbation.
3. That, in order to aid them in publishing the proceedings of their conference, and their proposed constitution . . . we request our ministers at once to bring this matter before their respective congregations and secure subscriptions to said work, which your committee presumes will cost fifteen cents per copy, and send the amount to Rev. P. C. Henkel or Rev. J. R. Moser.¹⁴

Further evidence that the two Synods had peacefully operated side by side is apparent, when one considers that P. C. Henkel joined the Missouri conference in the early 1870's, was unanimously accepted back into the Tennessee Synod in 1877, and was viewed as a "true friend" of the Missouri Synod at the time of his death. Also, J. M. Smith, and many other Conover area Lutherans, were very familiar with Catawba County-born Pastor, J. R. Moser, who preached in the area for many years, and who had helped found the Missouri Conference. Several geographical districts within the bounds of the Missouri Synod had been originally settled by the Lutherans from Catawba, Lincoln, and Gaston Counties of North Carolina, and there were many family ties to the area. Rev. Christian Moretz, who was no stranger to Catawba County, was the first Lutheran Pastor in Missouri. In 1888 and 1889, P. C. Henkel corresponded with Missouri Pastor L. M. Wagner, expressing his desires that Wagner become a professor at Concordia, and that the college and Tennessee Synod would eventually become connected to the Missouri Synod. So a request to the Missouri Synod should not have been considered unusual under the circumstances.¹⁵

10. "Continuation of Extracts of the Late Meeting of the Tenn. Synod," *OCP*, XIX:42, 21 October 1891. *Smith-Missouri*.

11. Wight, p. 54, cited from Yoder Diary, October 12, 1891.

12. Henkel, pp. 119-120, 139.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 195.

15. *Review*, p. 41. Henkel, pp. 48, 52, 96, 137, 195, 198, 205, 206.

Accordingly, the Conover Trustees approached the Mission Board of the German Missouri Synod at St. Louis for assistance. Since Concordia College was English-speaking, the matter was forwarded to Reverend F. Kuegele, President of the English Synod of Missouri. Kuegele contacted the Tennessee Synod headquarters in New Market, Virginia, and advised them of this request, and he, along with Reverend William Dallman, arrived in Conover in December 1891 to investigate the inquiry. During this visit, they also visited the professors in Hickory, to ascertain that there were no just reasons why Missouri should not honor Concordia's request. One report states that none were offered, although "one man expressed fears that the coming of Missouri would lead to complications."¹⁶

An agreement was drawn up on December 31, 1891, between Missouri and the remaining Trustees of Concordia. Absent were J. C. Moser, A. L. Crouse, and Silas Smyre, of the Hickory party. Also Rev. J. A. Rudisill, who had been a close ally of M. L. Little at Gaston Female College, was not present. The agreement included provisions for Missouri to send a president and a pastor, "to have full liberty in the pulpit and at the altar according to his conscience bound in God's Word." Graduates of Concordia were to attend St. Louis or Springfield colleges for ministerial education. It was hoped that through a series of "Free Conferences," Missouri and Tennessee could iron out any differences, and perhaps unite. The Divine Call actually was made by a unanimous vote of Concordia congregation, and Reverend William Herman Theodore Dau accepted.¹⁷

Dau had received six years of literary training and four years in theology; therefore, his educational background was certainly exceptional. In early May of 1892, he and his wife, two children, and a sister-in-law arrived by train in Conover to "quite a crowd." His young daughter, who suffered with a case of diphtheria, was promptly attended by Dr. Yount, and recovered within a few days. Volunteers who helped Dau move his belongings remembered that his personal library was "large and well stocked." The following Sunday, he delivered his first sermon in the College Chapel, and followed with a second service that afternoon. Later that month he witnessed his first commencement exercises at the College.¹⁸

On May 26, Dau was installed at a morning service as Pastor of the congregation by Rev. F. Kuegele, President of the English Missouri Synod, and assisted by Pastors Smith and Bernheim. That afternoon, he was installed as President of Concordia College by J. M. Smith. A press release contained the following: "It is not a false prophecy to predict, that these installation services have begun a new era as to Concordia College."¹⁹

Nothing could have been more true -- but not exactly as the writer anticipated. Other than his reception at the depot, Dau did not find the affairs around Conover very cordial. The school problems were somewhat expected, as many in the Tennessee Synod believed that Missouri had unfairly taken control over property of the Tennessee Synod. After all, it was Tennessee pastors who founded Concordia College, Tennessee congregations who paid for and supported it, and Tennessee professors who ran it for years. For Missouri to gain control over this institution without paying one cent infuriated them. Secondly, the Missouri Synod was viewed as aggressive in their mission zeal, and as proselytizers into a region already occupied by Tennessee, Ohio, and the North Carolina Synods. However, the Conover people felt the College property was nearly worthless to the Tennessee Synod, or anyone else, without outside help.

The UNITED SYNOD and the "FOUR POINTS"

The Tennessee Synod had other problems in its midst. Its North Carolina Conference was already squarely divided over the college, and also had been gradually dividing over its association with the United Synod of the South. As early as 1874, the Zion congregation, with J. M. Smith as Pastor, requested the Tennessee Synod to offer its guidance regarding membership in secret societies. By 1879, outgoing President, P. C. Henkel, encouraged the Synod to make a public statement on this subject. This resulted in what became known as the

16. *Situation*, p. 14. *Review*, p. 11. A response to Kuegele's letter to New Market has not been located.

17. *Situation*, pp. 14-16. *Review*, pp. 10-11.

18. J. M. Smith, "Arrival," *OCF*, XX:19, 11 May 1892.

19. Chas. L. Coon, "Installation at Conover," *OCF*, XX:23, 8 June 1892.

"Summit Rule," defining the Tennessee Synod positions against the "Four Points" -- pulpit fellowship, altar fellowship, Chiliasm, and secret societies.²⁰

On November 12, 1884, a Diet was held in Salisbury to attempt a formal union between the General Synod of the South, the Tennessee, and the Holston Synods. They agreed on a doctrinal basis for union. When this arrangement reached the floor of the Tennessee Synod in fall of 1885, it was ratified over the dissenting voices of P. C. Henkel and A. L. Crouse. Henkel believed that the proposed Constitution should include a statement on the "Four Points." Crouse felt similarly that some statement was necessary but thought it could be satisfactorily included in the By-Laws.²¹ A second "Diet" was held in Roanoke, Virginia on June 23, 1886. Meetings were there conducted by the General Synod, the Diet, the General Synod, the Diet, etc.. By the third day, the General Synod and Diet were dissolved, and a new "United Synod of the South" was organized, with the Tennessee Synod included as a member.²²

When St. John's hosted the Ohio's Concordia District meeting a month earlier, the President's Report included the following statement:

But we find many who bear the name [Lutheran] that do not believe some of the cardinal doctrines; more who will not practice the faith they profess over against the sects around them.²³

President Tressel continued with a blast against the General Synod on doctrinal grounds, and supported "Lutheran pulpits for Lutherans," etc. -- the "Four Points."²⁴

The editor of the Ohio Synod's *Lutheran Standard* immediately continued the rhetoric, and made charges against the *Lutheran Visitor* (newsletter published in South Carolina), that it supported unionism and "loose teaching."²⁵

Amid these criticisms, on November 9, 1886, the Tennessee Synod ratified the actions of its delegates, and, upon motion by P. C. Henkel, resolved that the by-laws of the United Synod include a statement that teachers or others employed by the United Synod pledge to adopt the provisions of the "Summit Rule."²⁶

Soon thereafter, another editorial from the Ohio Synod accused Tennessee of aligning with those who were "openly unionistic in practice." Cited as proof was the communion liturgy used at the Roanoke convention, which invited "all who are members in good standing of other Christian Churches."²⁷ This certainly was not the professed practice of the Tennessee Synod as stated in its "Summit Rule," and until the Ohio Synod arrived in North Carolina, there had been few, if any, discussions between the two synods on this subject. Ohio's *Lutheran Standard* published follow-ups, written by "T" -- E. L. S. Tressel of the Concordia English District. "T" was then reminded of his own District's meeting, held at St. John's in 1886, where two non-members of the Ohio Synod communed, one Baptist communed, and other non-Ohioans were invited to the Lord's table.²⁸

The first of a long series of synodical disputes had now begun and was centered in Catawba County, North Carolina. Ohio accused Tennessee of heresy. Tennessee replied that the Ohio reached North Carolina because of adultery, not "imaginary heresy," and the Adam Miller story was again broadcast. Ohio issued a report from a Pastor's Conference held in Pastor G. L. Hunt's home, from which a thesis on alcohol excess and temperance was published. Tennessee replied that this would "call down the frown of our indulgent, heavenly Father." Tennessee accused Ohio of proselytizing in North Carolina due to its establishment of a seminary in a city without a congregation, and where there were only "one or two members," and termed it "spiritual sheep-stealing." Ohio felt

20. *TN Synod Minutes-1874*. Henkel, p. 209.

21. C., "Tennessee Synod," *OCP*, XIII:46, 19 November 1885.

22. "General Synod," *OCP*, XIV:26, 1 July 1886. "General Synod--The Diet--The United Synod," *OCP*, XIV:27, 8 July 1886.

23. *Minutes of the Tenth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Ev. Luth. Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, Held in St. John's Church, Catawba Co., N. C., From the 5th to the 10th of May, 1886*. (Columbus, OH, *The Lutheran Book Concern*, 1886), pp. 4-5, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

24. *Ibid*.

25. *LS*, XLIV:42, 23 Oct 1886, (Columbus, OH: 1886), p. 340, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

26. J. S. Koerner, "Ohio in North Carolina, No. 3," *OCP*, XV:16, 21 April 1887.

27. "The Lutheran Standard," *OCP*, XIV:49, 9 December 1886.

28. J. S. Koerner, "Ohio in North Carolina," *OCP*, XV:16, 21 April 1887. "True," "Facts and Figures," *OCP*, XV:24, 16 June 1887.

it was correcting the errors of Tennessee, and had a "call to the work." Articles, charges, and rebuttals continued for about one year.²⁹

At the United Synod meeting of 1887, Tennessee pressed for a form of the "Summit Rule," then labeled "Article III," to be included in the proposed By-Laws of the United Synod. Action was postponed until 1889. In 1888, Tennessee resolved that it could not cooperate with the United Synod unless "this precautionary request" was adopted, but maintained its membership. It was hoped that this pressure would induce the other Synods to comply. Some arguments against adoption of Article III stated that the Confessions were the basis for union, and further clarification was therefore unnecessary. Similarly, others felt the proposal was "sorely in want of support, from either reason or Scripture."³⁰

The Tennessee Synod, then, refused to accept a pastor's letter of transfer from the North Carolina Synod over this issue, and Ohio charged the United Synod with being "Discordant."³¹ The United Synod was not very united in its views regarding church practice.

As the 1889 United Synod meeting approached, some in the Tennessee Synod were questioning the alliance, as other synods were preparing to vote against "Article III." One opposing pastor from another Synod emphatically stated, "When that rule is passed I will take my hat and cane and leave."³² Articles appeared in *Lutheran Visitor* in opposition to the by-law. The Tennessee Synod responded with a series of written contributions by J. C. Moser and P. C. Henkel. As Henkel's controversial style and debating abilities have been mentioned previously, examples from his last debate are cited. When Rev. George H. Cox, of the North Carolina Synod, stated that "Article III" conflicted with the constitution of the United Synod, Henkel responded:

Wherein does the latter part of the third proposed regulation, by-law, conflict with the constitution? Is the constitution in conflict with the confessional basis or is it in harmony with it? How is it? If the confessional basis is in harmony with the constitution then whatever is in conflict with the constitution must also be in conflict with the confessional basis. Now, if that "latter part of the third regulation is in conflict with the constitution," which that regulation rejects or condemns – secret society worship, exchange of pulpits, mixed or intercommunion, &c., then it will also follow that we come in conflict with the confessional basis as well as the constitution, by condemning these errors (as I am bound to call them). . . . But if he or any one else thinks that he can prove that the errors mentioned (as I call them) are in harmony with the confessional basis, then I will admit that . . . He must reason better than he has, or I will be bound to conclude that he regards a *rejection* of secret society worship, &c., as being in conflict with both the constitution and the confessional basis of the Lutheran Church.³³

If the different synods in connection with the United Synod are not in favor of Secret Society worship, its plan of salvation, exchange of pulpits, intercommunion, &c., why do they not unite with the Tenn. Synod in denouncing these things; and also in instructing their delegates to take a firm stand against such corruptions? If this would be done, we could be united, otherwise it will be out of the question.³⁴

We affirm that this rule is sustainable by both the Scriptures and the Symbols of the Lutheran Church; whilst the position of Dr. Hawkins and his followers is condemned by both; hence, the high importance of the rule or regulation.³⁵

The last paragraph may very well be the final published word from the pen of P. C. Henkel, as a death announcement appeared directly thereafter. But others, including J. C. Moser, continued this cause.

The United Synod, again in 1889, tabled passage of "Article III" until 1891. As time passed, more pastors and their congregations began to press for withdrawal from the United Synod, but the sentiment was nowhere near unanimous. The Ohio Synod was in favor of firm statements of stricter practices of pulpit and altar fellowship.

29. "The Lutheran Standard," *OCF*, XIV:49, 9 December 1886. "Outlook," *OCF*, XV:4, 27 January 1887. "The Lutheran Standard Flickers Again," *OCF*, XV:11, 17 March 1887. "Proselyting in North Carolina," *OCF*, XV:21, 26 May 1887. "True," "Facts and Figures," *OCF*, XV:24, 16 June 1887.

30. Respondeo, "That 'Protest' in the Visitor," *OCF*, XXI:11, 15 March 1893. Henkel, pp. 209-210, 233-237, 245-246. *TN Synod Minutes-1888*, p. 28.

31. "Discordant," *OCF*, XV:51, 21 December 1887.

32. Chrysostom [probably J. C. Moser], "Those Burning Questions," *OCF*, XVII:44, 30 October 1889.

33. Polycarp C. Henkel, "That Discussion," *OCF*, XVII:31, 31 July 1889.

34. Polycarp C. Henkel, "That Discussion," *OCF*, XVII:36, 4 September 1889.

35. Polycarp C. Henkel, "That Discussion," *OCF*, XVII:40, 2 October 1889. Dr. Hawkins was the editor of *Visitor*.

When Missouri arrived in Catawba County with similar practices, this placed further strain on local Tennessee pastors to defend the charge of "unionism" with an ecclesiastical organization that refused to formally address these alleged laxities in church discipline. These two Synods had grown large with these careful practices. In 1892, the statistics of the three synods were as follows: Missouri, 1,500 ministers, 387,000 members; Ohio, 360 ministers, 67,000 members; Tennessee, 37 ministers, 10,000 members.³⁶

Catawba County was still an area with at least four "Union" Churches, including St. John's, where two or more congregations worshipped in the same building. Some still held occasional joint services, and others had "union" Sunday Schools where the children from more than one denomination were taught together. Often, the ownership of the church land was a legal right due to the original deed, and all of the "Four Points" in the minds of the pastors were not to change this. Many of the Carolina congregations were viewed by the western Synods as faulty in church practice and discipline due to these legal rights and the congregational expediences of their forefathers -- and were branded as "Unionists."

No sooner did Pastor Dau arrive in Conover, than an article appeared in *Lutheran Visitor*, advocating the cause of the United Synod, and describing Article III as "exclusive doctrines of the Missourians," and deprivation of "personal liberty of conscience." Dau immediately fired an article to the unofficial Tennessee Synod publication, *Our Church Paper*, staunchly defending Missouri's position on personal liberty, and challenging the author to prove otherwise or to recant and apologize.³⁷ Synodical contention now had a new voice, and the Lutheran community quickly realized Pastor Dau's adeptness in theology, as well as his facility with the written English language that he spoke with a thick German accent.

Meanwhile, Dau seemed to make every effort towards cooperation with the Tennessee Synod. On May 26, three days before his installation, Dau and Kuegele accompanied Pastors Smith and Bernheim to a North Carolina Conference meeting of the Tennessee Synod, held at Salem Church, Lincoln County. P. C. Lail, C. O. Smith, J. H. Gilbert, J. A. Yount, and J. B. Dellinger represented these pastors' congregations of Concordia, St. John's, Bethel, St. Timothy, and Sharon. The well-attended, three-day, meeting could best be described as routine. An on-going committee, which had been previously assigned to write a pamphlet on pulpit and altar fellowship, was reduced to a committee of A. L. Crouse. There was not a word in the reports about Concordia College or in preparation for the upcoming United Synod meeting.³⁸ At this meeting, Smith and Bernheim introduced a motion to allow Dau and Kuegele to make a statement regarding the doctrine of predestination. This was defeated, but an informal discussion of the subject was conducted among several of the attendees that evening.³⁹

Due to a washout which resulted in a railroad accident near Asheville, the twenty-six delegates from North Carolina (including those from the North Carolina Synod) arrived a day late to Knoxville, on Wednesday, June 23, 1892, for the United Synod biennial convention. The subject of its By-Laws reached the floor on Friday afternoon and the attendees were in a state of "anxiety and suspense." Upon consent of Synod, Dr. A. J. Brown appointed one delegate from each participating Synod to a special committee to enter a recommendation on Article III the following morning. The committeeman from the Tennessee Synod was Dr. Socrates Henkel of New Market, Virginia.⁴⁰

When Synod re-convened, Brown offered the committee report:

It is our persuasion that this body is not prepared to express a unanimous judgment [sic] on these regulations, be it, therefore, Resolved, That the report on by laws, &c., be adopted without them.⁴¹

The debate continued, and many comments were directed against the committee report, with the North Carolina and South Carolina Synods encouraging its adoption. Two delegates contended that adoption without

36. Respondeo, "Position of the Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XXI:6, 8 February 1893. Respondeo, "That 'Protest' in the Visitor," *OCF*, XXI:11, 15 March 1893. Henkel, pp. 209-210, 233-237, 245-246.

37. W. H. T. Dau, "A Letter to Rev. J. Hawkins, D. D.," *OCF*, XX:20, 18 May 1892.

38. J. L. Deaton, "The North Carolina Conference, Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XX:23, 8 June 1892.

39. *Situation-OCF*.

40. R. B. Peery, "Meeting of the United Synod," *OCF*, XX:26, 29 June 1892. Q., "The United Synod of the South," *OCF*, XX:29, 20 July 1892, cited from *The Lutheran*.

41. R. B. Perry, "Meeting of the United Synod," *OCF*, XX:27, 6 July 1892.

Article III would "condemn the principles contained in those rules; but the majority understood, that it was simply an agreement to mutual toleration, without condemning either party." The committee recommendation passed with two dissenting votes, whose names were recorded in the Minutes.⁴² This far from pleased certain Catawba County Pastors of the Tennessee Synod, as many considered the issue "buried." Was a union between the Missouri pastors and the Tennessee Synod now more likely?⁴³

The issue was far from dead in Catawba County, but "Article III" became entangled into other matters. The participants in the discussions could generally be found in the camps of the leaders of the three Lutheran colleges.

COLLEGE AND CONGREGATIONAL CONFLICT

Local congregational problems had begun to develop in early spring of 1891, when the Concordia College Trustees placed a Call to George A. Romoser, student at the St. Louis Seminary. At that time, the two Iredell County congregations of St. Martin's and Sharon were not being regularly served by a pastor, and the sharing of Romoser's services was discussed with them. This had been standard practice for Conover professors to serve in area pulpits in order to decrease the salary expenses for both congregation and college. Questions were raised in the two congregations as to whether they should proceed with the calls to Romoser, over the advice to the contrary from the Tennessee Synod. Dissension was aroused.⁴⁴

In accordance with the request of Concordia congregation, Rev. Dau issued an appeal for cooperation to the President of the Tennessee Synod, Rev. J. P. Stirewalt of New Market, on July 26, 1892:

The relation to the E. L. Tenn. Synod of two ministers who, as yet, are members of the English E. L. Synod of Mo. and other states, while at the same time, they are in charge of congregations belonging to the E. L. Tenn. Synod, has, of late, become a subject of much heated discussion and more uncharitable judgment in certain quarters of your Synod. The two ministers to whom I have referenced are, Rev. Prof. Geo. A. Romoser and the undersigned. It is with a view of explaining to you, as the official head of the E. L. Tenn. Synod, the position of the aforementioned Missourians, as also of asking your kind assistance in averting a threatening rupture in your synod, that I take the liberty of writing you this letter.

I do sincerely deplore that I cannot at present, conscientiously become a member of the E. L. Tennessee Synod; it is, however, my earnest desire to unite myself with your synod as soon as certain obstacles are removed. For, it matters little to me what the appellation of the synod is to which I may belong, so long as it is a truly lutheran synod in doctrine and practice. The fact, that the E. L. Tenn. Synod is at present, connected with other lutheran bodies whose lutheranism I have grave reasons to regard as questionable and not genuine, causes me to stand aloof. Could representatives of the E. L. Tenn. Synod and the E. L. Synod of Mo. &c. meet and jointly discuss the doctrines of our beloved church, and could these discussions, by the help of God, be so blessed as to result in a public declaration, that their is perfect unanimity in doctrine and pract[ice] between the two synods, I should not hesitate any longer to apply for membership in the E. L. Tenn. Synod. Rumors are being circulated that the Missouri pastors are trying to cause a schism in the E. L. Tenn. Synod and capture a congregation or two; I disdain any intentions of such a nature and sincerely regret these reports. I have entered the precincts of your synod in answer to a divine call and with no other mission in my mind than to preach the blessed gospel and build our lutheran Zion. I have been careful to avoid even the appearance as if I wished to cause a defection from the E. L. Tenn. of the congregations with which I have had to deal heretofore. However parties appear to be at work against me, whose names I cannot ascertain, but in whose interests it seems to be to bring about a rupture in the E. L. Tenn. Synod and throw the odium of having caused the same on the Missourians.⁴⁵

Upon completion of this prophecy, he continued this lengthy letter by describing the plight of St. Martin's congregation, which was still in a state of unrest. Dau's primary concern was that the St. Martin's not be aggravated into a split.⁴⁶

42. *Ibid.*

43. W. H. T. Dau, "Our Work in North Carolina," *TLW*, XIII:3, 7 July 1894, (page no. missing).

44. *Situation-OCP. Situation and Review* also present some details of the controversies within these congregations.

45. Letter from W. H. T. Dau to J. P. Stirewalt, July 26, 1892, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. It is fortunate that this original letter was located, as Dau's intentions and motives are plainly stated. This original letter is damaged, and text is incomplete. The portions shown in [brackets] were added by the author.

46. *Ibid.*

Rev. Stirewalt's reply included the following:

In the first place allow me to assure you that I do sincerely regret the serious troubles that do exist in our dear Lutheran Church in N. C. I do certainly trust that these troubles will yet be overruled & direct for good in the end. I regret also that they have "become a subject of much heated discussion" & fondly hope that this will soon cease; for unless this does cease the troubles are not likely to become less.

It might be advisable for representative men of the E. L. Tennessee Synod & the E. L. Synod of Mo. &c. to meet & discuss some of the principle doctrines of our Lutheran Church. Such discussions under the blessing of God have been beneficial. They might still be productive of much good.

I am willing to do what I can to avert the threatening rupture in our Synod or in any of the congregations in her connection & to preserve and perpetuate peace & harmony between pastor & people.

But this idea comes impressing to my mind. Rev. Prof. Geo. A. Romoser was called & installed without consulting the President according to the Resolution 6 [not readable] & in congregations belonging to the E. L. Tennessee Synod without consulting the President of the E. L. Tenn. Synod, & without its being so much as mentioned to him for the reason I infer that he had no authority or jurisdiction in this case. Now if he had no jurisdiction in the case at that time what authority or jurisdiction has he at this time?

I presume the Missouri pastors & all others in the same relation to us who are serving congregations belonging to the E. L. Tennessee Synod, will report all the baptisms, confirmations &c. to the Tenn. Synod.⁴⁷

It is doubtful that Pastor Dau favored Stirewalt with a Christmas card in the year 1892. The Tennessee Synod was not very receptive to these newcomers from the midwest.

Eventually, George A. Romoser accepted the Calls for professorship and pastorate, and arrived by train in Conover on July 28. On the fifth Sunday in July, he preached his first sermon at a Mission Festival held outdoors on the College Campus, from the theme of "Who we are and what we are here for." Pastor Bernheim conducted the liturgy and read the scriptures. A second morning sermon was delivered by Pastor N. G. Bakke from Concord. Rain forced the assembly into the Chapel for dinner. Afterwards, Dau gave an address on the history of the Missouri Synod and its purpose in Conover. They were "not here to stir up discord . . . but to preach the Gospel and work for the Lutheran Church." Pastors J. M. Smith and J. A. Rudisill were also in attendance.⁴⁸ On the first Sunday of August, George A. Romoser was installed at St. Martin's, with J. M. Smith delivering the installation sermon.⁴⁹

During the fall communion season of 1892, Dau assisted Smith at his congregations of Bethel, Old St. Paul's, and St. Peter's. It is quite likely that Pastor Bernheim also allowed Dau and/or Romoser to assist him at St. John's and St. Timothy. For the next year or so, it was not unusual for one of the Concordia Professors to supply or assist in Smith's and Bernheim's congregations, in addition to their own obligations.⁵⁰

Thus, the English Missouri Synod furnished two excellent professors in a timely manner, and they both got off the train preaching. On August 15, 1892, school opened with a faculty of Dau, Romoser, Charles L. Coon, Mrs. Alice Long, and Mrs. Fanny O. Eckard. While enrollment of 132 students was reported in July, a later report contained only twenty-six students, including four in the college department. Those in attendance found a very capable staff.⁵¹ A description of the disorganized transition year is best described by the new President:

The first year found us with a handful of students, ranging in proficiency from the lisping A B C Darian to the grave and [the] reverend Senior, and three professors to teach them all. The situation was baffling, we could not think of turning any applicant off; accordingly provisions had to [be] made for their proper accommodation.⁵²

47. *Ibid.*, Stirewalt's letter of reply, August 1892, was in the same envelope as Dau's letter above.

48. "Mission Festival at Conover, N. C.," *OCF*, XX:34, 24 August 1892, cited from *TLW*. *OCF*, XX:32, 10 August 1892, lists date of Romoser's arrival.

49. *J. M. Smith Diary* - 1893.

50. *Ibid.*, 1892-1893.

51. Dau, et al, *Reports of the Faculty of Concordia College, 1892-1895* (lists 26 students). "Catalog of Concordia College," *OCF*, XX:30, 27 July 1892 (lists 132 students).

52. Dau, *TLW*, XIII:8, cited above.

At the September Pastors Conference, both Dau and Romoser accompanied Smith and Bernheim. Also in attendance were delegates from St. John's and St. Martin's, but none from Concordia congregation. The two Concordia professors were invited to be seated with the conference, and Pastor Smith delivered one of the sermons. From the published Minutes, all parties seemed cordial, and A. L. Crouse was nearly finished with his position thesis on pulpit and altar fellowship.⁵³

Later that month, the Tennessee Synod held its annual convention in Hickory. Dr. Socrates Henkel stopped in Conover a few days earlier to visit Concordia member, P. C. Lail, son-in-law of his brother, P. C. Henkel. He also met with the four Conover pastors and Rev. Kuegele, who was also in town on a visit. Dr. Henkel's conclusions were:

Conover is the center of a large Lutheran community, around which there are, perhaps, as many as ten Lutheran congregations, within the limits of seven miles in different directions. At this point Concordia College is situated, in a moral, healthy, Christian community. With an able Faculty, and a well arranged curriculum, the school is in an encouraging condition. We formed a favorable opinion of the professors.⁵⁴

When Synod convened on September 30 in Hickory, the same four Conover pastors were present for the largest delegation (91) ever assembled for a Tennessee Synod meeting. Several pastors and professors from the Ohio and North Carolina Synods were also in attendance. The school issue was set for Monday morning, and attracted "much attention and intense interest." Reports were submitted from Concordia's President Dau and the Board of Trustees. The Committee on Literary Institutions stated that Concordia's "Board of Trustees had called men from the Missouri Synod, and had filled vacancies, and that its action was not submitted to Synod, for its endorsement and ratification. . . . We recommend that the synod can now take no action in regard to the further fostering care of this institution." While discontinuing support for Concordia, the Synod did not endorse Highland Academy/Lenoir College. One observer stated that this was due to "the present condition and relation of things relative to school matters."⁵⁵ Other Synod business consisted of a resolution against the United Synod for its failure to adopt Article III.⁵⁶

On the following Sunday, Pastor Kuegele was invited into the St. John's pulpit, and preached a sermon on "predestination."⁵⁷

The final joint public meeting of 1892 was a December pastors' conference attended by Smith and Bernheim, but without the Concordia professors. Among the delegates were representatives of Concordia, St. John's, Bethel, St. Peter's, and St. Timothy. Two festering issues reached the floor of this assembly. Rev. A. L. Crouse had completed his pamphlet on pulpit and altar fellowship, and presented it to the Conference. A committee of J. M. Smith, J. C. Moser, and J. A. Rudisill reviewed the manuscript, issued its approval, and recommended "the publication of this production in pamphlet form for general distribution among our people," with a few minor clarifications and additions. The manuscript was then read to the audience, and eventually was approved in entirety for publication.⁵⁸ This publication was symbolic of the attitudes of many North Carolina pastors about Article III of the United Synod, yet the entire Tennessee Synod could generate only two negative votes at the prior United Synod meeting.

The second issue involved the congregation of St. Martin's in Iredell County, which submitted a letter requesting an investigation into its previous call to Romoser. A committee of J. R. Peterson, Timothy Moser, and

53. J. P. Price, "Conference Meeting," *OCF*, XX:37, 14 September 1892.

54. Socrates Henkel, "Our Trip to Synod," *OCF*, XX:41, 12 October 1892.

55. P. C. W., "Meeting of the Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XX:40, 5 October 1892. "Meeting of the E. L. Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XX:41, 12 October 1892, cited from Hickory *Daily Bulletin*. Socrates Henkel, "Our Trip to Synod," *OCF*, XX:41, 12 October 1892. *Situation*, p. 16. *Review*, pp. 12, 14-15. *Smith-Missouri*, cited from Minutes of 1892, p. 27.

56. Socrates Henkel, *OCF*, XX:41, cited above.

57. R. L. Fritz, "In Conclusion," *OCF*, XXII:18, 2 May 1894. This sermon was later claimed to be the first agitation to the St. John's congregation on predestination. It appears that the "agitation" did not appear until several months later, due to Bernheim's resignation.

58. L. L. Lohr, "Conference Meeting," *OCF*, XX:50, 14 December 1892.

L. L. Lohr was appointed to review the circumstances.⁵⁹ St. Martin's was not only in a situation that had pitted Missouri against Tennessee, but now Tennessee against Tennessee.

While some pastors outside the North Carolina Conference were trying to soothe the "Four Point" issue, an argumentative challenge was issued to the Tennessee Synod in January 1893, by way of an *Our Church Paper* article entitled, "What is the Doctrinal Position of the Tennessee Synod." Basically, it accused the Tennessee Synod of sitting on the fence. If it were truly behind the United Synod, then it must either agree in practice and actively participate, or withdraw in its entirety; otherwise, it was carrying a "paper faith." But the parting threat that sent chills through the Tennessee Synod was as follows:

Again, I ask what is the doctrinal position of the Tennessee Synod? Does she hold to the doctrine of election with Ohio or Missouri? Does she hold with the "Formula of Concord," as it stands, or has she a private interpretation of her own on this symbol? The laity of the church want to know, and they have a right to know, or else some of her membership may go to Ohio or Missouri, or cling to the United Synod. This question . . . demands an answer.⁶⁰

Had the Tennessee Synod, which historically prided itself on its staunch doctrinal positions, become clouded, unionistic, or indecisive? Was the Tennessee Synod reluctant to take a doctrinal position on the debatable subject of "election" or "predestination"? Some observers thought so.

During the next months, the alliance was debated back and forth in the Lutheran presses, with the United Synod advocates pitted against the "Four Point" men. Often the prodding was similar to: "The laity are waiting; watchmen, on the walls, let them hear."⁶¹

On March 9, 1893, a communication was delivered to the Missouri Synod, stating that "a number of ministers of the Tennessee Synod are antagonizing Concordia College." The Trustees offered the Concordia property to the Missouri Synod, provided it receive her "fostering care." Missouri declined the property offer at that time, as it felt this would not encourage the possibility of unity with the Tennessee Synod.⁶² But the fact that the offer was made resulted in further division, distention, and mistrust of the intentions of the new Lutheran neighbors in Conover.

During the period after the arrival of Dau and Romoser, Trustees H. A. Herman and J. T. Miller, from St. Timothy, felt that the Missouri pastors were deceiving them, "and that they were after territory and would take every congregation that they could get." Herman and Miller were opposed to offering the college property to the Missouri Synod; therefore, they resigned and "washed their hands clean of that business." The Board then elected M. M. Holler, also of St. Timothy, but of opposite point of view.⁶³

All of these developments materially affected the congregation of St. John's. After Reverend J. M. Smith tendered his resignation in 1883, St. John's had access to the College faculty for pastoral services. During the stormy ten year period from 1883 to 1893, St. John's was served by the Revs. J. C. Moser, J. M. Smith again, and C. H. Bernheim—one Concordia College President, two professors, and three Trustees. Like the Ohio Synod and the Reformed congregations, professors regularly supplied the pulpit. The background of the Concordia College affair had a direct, and very important, effect on the history of St. John's, as will be shown.⁶⁴

At the April 27th Pastors' Conference, Smith and Bernheim were conspicuous by their absences, and Professor Romoser, by his presence. The United Synod was not a topic on the agenda; but other disturbing issues were the continuing situation at St. Martin's, and some serious charges against Pastor Bernheim.⁶⁵

Upon Bernheim's resignation to St. John's on May 20, 1893, the Tennessee Lutherans of St. John's found themselves in a difficult dilemma. The available Tennessee Synod pastors were virtually all connected with the

59. *Ibid.*

60. Enquirer, "What is the Doctrinal Position of the Tennessee Synod," *OCP*, XXI:1, 4 January 1893; also Edward T. Horn, "Our General Work," *ibid.*

61. Respondeo, "Position of the Tennessee Synod," *OCP*, XXI:6, 8 February 1893. Respondeo, "That 'Protest' in the Visitor," *OCP*, XXI:11, 15 March 1893.

62. *Situation*, pp. 14-16. *Review*, pp. 12, 23.

63. Miller, p. 2. These are direct quotes from J. T. Miller's writings, plainly expressing his opinion.

64. *Smith, 1949*, the rapid sequence of pastors was cited here and in other Smith histories.

65. L. L. Lohr, "Conference," *OCP*, XXI:19, 10 May 1893.

college affairs in some way. As St. John's was not in a joint pastorate arrangement with another congregation, it could not afford to go out-of-state for a pastor's services. The selection of a Lenoir College proponent was certain to meet with loud opposition by those influential members whose youth were currently attending Concordia College. The choices were few, and no candidate was agreeable to all voters. In the presence of J. M. Smith and C. H. Bernheim, St. John's submitted a Call to a Missourian at Concordia College, and it was accepted by Rev. W. H. T. Dau.66

It is difficult to determine the larger significance of this decision over a century later. First, it provided additional financial support to the College President and was certain to be inducement for his continued labors in Conover. Secondly, it proved that St. John's was firmly behind the location and success of Concordia College. But symbolically, to some in the Tennessee Synod, it represented congregational defection to Missouri, and the reality of continuation of a competitive college.

This Call was not to be without its problems. At the North Carolina Pastor's Conference on July 27, the following preamble and resolution were included in the proceedings:

WHEREAS, Some of the congregations in connection with the North Carolina Conference of the E. L. Tennessee Synod, have called pastors who are not in connection with our Synod, and who have not sought connection with us, but have refused to cooperate with us in our work, and thereby caused trouble and division in some of our congregations; therefore be it

Resolved, By this conference that we advise all our congregations to call pastors who are in our own synodical connection, or who will unqualifiedly and unconditionally agree to unite with our Synod and cooperate with us in our conference and Synod work.67

Concordia, Sharon, St. Martin's, and St. John's had now Called Missouri pastors, with St. John's being the only one made recently. How easy it must have been for the Conference to pass such a resolution, without either pastor or delegate representing the unnamed congregations! The Committee on Missions reported that "Prof. R. A. Yoder has been preaching at a point near Clarmon[t] [sic] in Catawba county, and may organize a congregation if found to be desirable and convenient."68 The situation at St. John's is painfully clear.

Absentees at the September 1893 Tennessee Synod convention in New Market were Pastors Dau, Romoser, Smith, and Bernheim. No Conover area congregation was represented by a delegate, and R. A. Yoder was not present. Perhaps travel distance and expenses contributed to the reasons for some, and college sessions, for others. Only J. H. Rexrode, the Ohio Synod pastor of St. John's, was present from the neighborhood and was seated as an advisory member. Synod was advised as to the completion of A. L. Crouse's publication, but the language of the ensuing resolution carefully did not endorse its contents, indicating disagreement between the local Pastors' Conference and its brethren from other states regarding pulpit and altar fellowship. A petition from St. John's was presented to the floor of the assembly (without the 37 signatories being listed):

No. 3 is a petition from St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, Catawba County, N. C., signed by thirty-seven of her members in which they state "that a number of their members have called Rev. W. H. T. Dau, of the Missouri Synod, as pastor. That the said W. H. T. Dau has not connected himself with our Synod, and has served our congregation as its pastor for about eighteen months, and will not promise to connect himself with the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, and even denounces our pastors as un-Lutheran. We being loyal to the Tennessee Synod, the Synod of our fathers, can not, under the circumstances, conscientiously worship with the said W. H. T. Dau, nor regard him as our pastor. We therefore ask you to advise us what to do under these sad conditions.69

66. Review, p. 10. Patten, no page numbers. CBI. At about this period, St. John's youth P. M. Dellinger, C. O. Smith, and Festus Sigman were attending Concordia College, and were sons of three St. John's Elders -- F. J. Dellinger, B. E. Smith, and N. E. Sigman, respectively. St. Timothy also was forced to select a pastor, and the college sentiments were nearly opposite, with the majority favoring the Hickory location and Pastor J. P. Miller. [Miller, p. 3].

67. L. L. Lohr, "Conference," OCP, XXI:32, 9 August 1893. Although this resolution does not name St. John's, its target is obvious.

68. Ibid.

69. Editor, "Meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod," OCP, XXI:39, 27 September 1893. Situation, p. 23. This petition appears irregular and manipulated, as the names would not later be listed. When members of the congregation were approached, it was determined that women signed the petition, which was contrary to church practice at that time. The assertion of "Calvinism" by its bearer prompted several signatures, and it was presented to a Synod meeting at a distant location, when a delegate from St. John's was not present.

The Synod appointed a committee of J. C. Moser, R. A. Yoder, and J. P. Miller, to "investigate that matter, and give the petitioners such advice as they may deem proper."⁷⁰ With a committee composed of three Hickory pastors/Lenoir College professors -- one of whom had been preaching in Claremont -- it is unlikely that impartial and unbiased advice could be offered to a church, which maintained strong ties to Concordia College and Pastors Smith and Bernheim, and which had now dared to Call one of the Missourians. The committee "investigated" the matter, and presented the following "advice" to a group of St. John's members at a meeting at Wike's School House near Claremont, on November 4, 1893:

We therefore advise:

That, whereas, you can not conscientiously worship at St. John's under its present pastor, who is a member of the Missouri Synod, who for doctrinal reasons will not connect himself with the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, and who on the subject of Election teaches a doctrine which is new to the Lutheran Church, and which is generally regarded as, at least, Calvinistic in its tendency; you remain faithful and loyal to the Tennessee Synod, that you organize yourselves into a congregation, and that you call a pastor of the Tennessee Synod, or one who will connect with it.⁷¹

The Tennessee Synod Committee

"advised" part of the St. John's congregation

TO SPLIT OFF!!!!

Although technically offered as "advice," in the morning shadow of St. John's Church steeple, one slab of marble must have trembled, as the primary proponent of congregational control of its own destiny, of the purity of the Divine Call, of the restraint of synods from regulatory or judiciary activities, and of synodical unsuitability to interfere in congregational matters -- David Henkel surely rolled over in his grave when the last sentence was read!

Other relevant actions of the 1893 Synod meeting were appropriation for a theological professor at Lenoir College, and subsidy of six beneficiary students to same. Synodical cooperation in the mission work of the United Synod was again resisted, but without withdrawal from the body.⁷²

Upon adjournment of this meeting, several issues had been decided firmly. Three Lutheran colleges would operate side-by-side in Catawba County, each supported by a competing Synod, as Tennessee had now attached itself financially to Lenoir College. The Tennessee Synod congregation at St. John's was again divided, with the minority preferring R. A. Yoder as its pastor, and meeting in Claremont. But several issues loomed large and undecided, including participation in the United Synod, and the doctrinal issue of "Election," resulting in the charges of "Calvinism" that appear in the St. John's "advice" above.

"THAT BURNING QUESTION"

To understand other events that were occurring simultaneously, it is necessary to delve somewhat into synodical history. Prior to 1881, the Missouri Synod, the Ohio Synod, and others had united into a synodical conference. The Missouri Synod was nearly totally German-speaking, and the Ohio Synod was primarily German with two English-speaking Districts. The local Tennessee Synod Re-Organized churches were soon to be aligned

70. *Ibid.* Moser and Yoder, by now should be names known to the reader. Jefferson Polycarp Miller is a new name in this history, and therefore, requires a brief biographical sketch. Miller was a graduate of Concordia College, was ordained in 1889, had previously served on Concordia's faculty, and in 1893, was preaching at Friendship/Shiloh in Alexander County and Sardis/St. Timothy in Catawba County, as well as being a professor of Greek and English at Lenoir College.

71. *Situation*, p. 24. Note that the charge of "Calvinism" appears in the "advice" and not in the original petition. This was also published in the Minutes, and in *Our Church Paper*.

72. Editor, "Meeting of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XXI:40, 4 October 1893.

with the Ohio Synod's Concordia English District. The subject of "election to salvation" or "predestination" arose in the Synodical Conference, was debated heatedly on several occasions, and the dispute was belabored throughout the Lutheran press. At its May 1881 convention, the Missouri Synod adopted thirteen propositions espousing their views on the issue. Furthermore, they required repentance from their critics if the latter wished to continue in fellowship. Later that year, the Joint Synod of Ohio severed its connection with the Synodical Conference, and several pastors withdrew or transferred from one synod to another. Ohio's English-speaking congregations and pastors, who favored Missouri's doctrinal position, were left without a synod. In 1884, an appeal went to the Missouri Synod for an English Synod or District, under Missouri's direction. The results were that "The Synodical Conference is of the opinion that the time has not yet come, now already, . . .", and Missouri remained without connection to English-speaking congregations. In 1887, another appeal was tendered to the Missouri Synod, with similar refusal, and the advice that the English pastors form their own Synod. A few years later, the Missouri Synod recognized the need for English, and actively began its mission efforts in that direction.⁷³ Thus, the English Synod of Missouri was partially the result of the rupture between Missouri and Ohio over the predestination issue, and the doctrinal disputes causing the original division had not been forgotten by either.

As theologian John Calvin placed the emphasis on God's omniscience, man is pre-destined for salvation or damnation and makes no contribution in this process. His followers were labeled as "Calvinists." From the opposite perspective, other theologians defined the conversion process as one involving the participation of man, through his faith in Christ. These adherents were styled as "Synergists," implying a cooperative effort between God and man to produce a favorable result. Neither opponent to the Missouri-Ohio debates were either Calvinists or Synergists, but that did not prevent them from improperly labeling each other accordingly.

Rather, Lutherans relied more heavily on "by grace are ye saved." The Ohio pastors maintained that "the universal grace of God and the universal redemption is a part of election, and in proof of this, passages from Scripture were cited that described the universal love of God, of His universal redemption, and the universal way or order of salvation." Missouri disagreed that redemption was universal, by citing "many are called but few are chosen." Missouri referred to the Book of Concord's statement that election to salvation was "only to the children of God." Over the centuries, Lutheran theologians had developed the doctrine of *intuitu fidei*, commonly translated as "in view of faith." Missouri had dropped usage of this traditional phrase, as it felt the phrase's meaning was vague and could be misunderstood. Missouri adopted the phrase, "unto faith." This brought forth the charge of breaking with Lutheran tradition, and the two phrases became the battle slogans throughout the Catawba County and Tennessee Synod debates that followed.⁷⁴

The Tennessee Synod had never been actively engaged in this dispute, and some of its pastors preferred the views of Ohio; some, Missouri; and others, neither. Until this time, those from all three inclinations had co-operated amicably in church and school affairs. The first sound of the controversy moving to North Carolina occurred in 1887, when the newly-arrived Ohio Synod published an article in *Lutheran Standard*, wherein it virtually challenged the Tennessee Synod and *Our Church Paper* to take a position with either Ohio or Missouri. The response quoted the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions, and disagreed with the Ohio phrase, "in view of faith," or other similar phrases not found in the Bible or the Confessions. When Ohio then charged the Tennessee Synod with taking a doctrinal stance with Missouri, the editor of *Our Church Paper*, stated, "we shall not regard it as a dishonor, but rather as an honor,--it is no disgrace to be caught in good company. . . . and yet we have not, by any means, been forced to the conclusion, that the Missourians hold or teach Calvinistic heresies or errors. . . . Nor do we intend . . . to be mixed up in that controversy; for we believe it unprofitable."⁷⁵

73. Rev. F. Kuegele, "Early History of The Lutheran Witness," *TLW* XXXIV:1, (12 Jan. 1915), pp. 3-4. Rev. F. Kuegele, "On Synodical Union," *TLW* XXXIX:11, (26 May 1910), pp. 83-84, with citations from Synod Minutes, 1884, pp. 76-77. Kuegele and his congregation were involved in each appeal to the Missouri Synod, and was one of the founders of the English Missouri Synod. Willard D. Allbech, *A Century of Lutherans in Ohio*, (The Antioch Press, Yellow Springs, OH: 1966), pp. 216-218, as cited from *LS*, July 30, 1881, and *Joint Synod of Ohio Minutes - 1881*, p. 7, footnote 64.

74. "Reporter," *TLW*, cited above. Kuegele, *TLW*, cited above. After reading hundreds of pages on the subject, this author can only shrug his shoulders and shake his head, that these highly-respected men argued so vehemently over these two phrases.

75. "The Lutheran Standard Flickers Again," *OCP*, XV:11, 17 March 1887. "Faith Necessary to Salvation," *OCP*, 24 March 1887. An example of cooperation is A. L. Crouse and the other founders of Lenoir College, who were in disagreement on this subject. Also, the Tennessee Synod had appointed J. S. Koerner and A. L. Crouse as their Professors of Theology at Concordia. There can be no mistake that the Tennessee Synod was

When word reached the public that a Missouri pastor might be called to the work at Conover, and before Pastor Dau had preached a single sermon in Catawba County, the accusations of "Calvinism" began. However, it was not the Tennessee Synod that leveled the original charge, but rather, the Ohio Synod and its Practical English Seminary in Hickory! Professor H. K. G. Doermann stated that he would challenge Pastor Dau to a debate upon his arrival. Some Tennessee Synod pastors joined in, and also began to use the phrase "Calvinism" against the new administration in Conover. Either Dau could be prepared to defend himself against this inappropriate epithet, or be publicly condemned as a heretic calling himself a Lutheran.⁷⁶

With the subject now being broadly publicized, the Tennessee pastors and people of Catawba County could either take sides with Missouri or Ohio, or await a doctrinal statement from their own Synod. No decisive and immediate interpretation came forth, but the excitement from certain local personalities did.⁷⁷

In early 1893, the situation at Lenoir College was described in glowing terms by a visiting pastor from an unrelated Synod, when he discovered that there were fourteen theological students in attendance:

Prof. Crouse surely deserves credit for his abundant labors, and may God strengthen him to continue in them, as he reaches those others cannot reach, and thus helps wonderfully to build up our Church. . . . We were also impressed with the unpretentious, unvarnished, but natural good will, harmony, kindness and mutual respect that was manifested by the professors towards one another. They seem to live and labor more in harmony in the one common, great work.⁷⁸

At the 1893 Tennessee Synod meeting, the focus of attention shifted towards doctrinal differences. It was decided by the Hickory pastors, led by A. L. Crouse, to sponsor a "Free Conference," beginning on October 25, 1893. No synodical authority was recognized, and the subject was "Free Will and Conversion," based on a thesis presented by Crouse. "The greater part of Conover emigrated to Lenoir College" for these debates. About thirty Lutheran Pastors were present, representing Tennessee, Ohio, Missouri, and North Carolina Synods.⁷⁹

Ohio and Missouri argued "zealously in behalf of their respective views," with Reverends Tressel and Doermann primarily representing Ohio, and Dau and Kuegele, for Missouri.⁸⁰ Within the past year, the old argument had re-appeared in Missouri's *The Lutheran Witness*. Rev. E. L. S. Tressel had recently completed an extensive thesis on this and related doctrinal subjects, which was published in a long series of articles in *Lutheran Standard*; therefore, he was well versed on the Ohio doctrine and was well-known as a formidable controversialist. Kuegele also had occasionally written doctrinal articles representing the Missouri position. The various experts on the subject had now brought their scholarly theological differences into the heart of the Tennessee Synod.⁸¹

A. L. Crouse's thesis was presented and was discussed freely. On the second day, R. A. Yoder was elected chairman in Crouse's absence. Tressel interjected the comment that "it was useless for us to agree on matters on which we did not agree." He then asked permission to read "quotations from the writings of the Missouri Synod, in order to show that her doctrines of conversion must be interpreted by her doctrines on election." This was allowed by the chairman, ruling that "election was a subject cognate to conversion." This evoked an immediate and passionate objection by Dau, who felt that this modification to the topic was intended "to frustrate the object of the meeting." In his disgust, he referred to this maneuver as a "trick," and Tressel, a "Balaam." If the revised subject were allowed for discussion without forewarning, Dau threatened to withdraw from the proceedings entirely. Later that evening, Dau offered Tressel the opportunity to discuss the subject on the following day. Tressel refused, "pleading that he was not ready." Dau was then convinced that the action was intended "to steal a march on Missouri." Dau further believed that the protest "incurred the severe displeasure of several reverend gentlemen then and there present, in whose interest it was that the Rev. T. succeed in stealing that march."

not on either side of the controversy prior to attempt to move the college.

76. Review, pp. 22-23. Observer, "That Election Controversy," *OCF* XXIV:16, 22 April 1896.

77. Dau, "Our Work in North Carolina," *TLW*, cited above. Observer, "That Election Controversy," *OCF*, cited above.

78. F. W. E. Peschau, "Visit to Hickory," *OCF*, XXI:8, 22 February 1893.

79. "Conover Letter," *The Newton Enterprise*, 3 November 1893. "Reporter," *TLW*, XII:17, (7 February 1894), pp. 130-131. The label "Missourians," as used in this era, includes those pastors of the Tennessee Synod who sided with Missouri in doctrinal and college affairs.

80. "The Free Conference," *Hickory Press*, 11 Jan 1894.

81. See W. M. Kibler, *LS*, 6 May 1893; Bischoff, *TLW*, 21 November 1893; Tressel, *LS*, 16 December 1893; Tressel, series of articles, *LS*, through May 1894.

After it was agreed to meet at some other time and place to discuss the issue, all parties agreed that **there would be no release to the local or Lutheran press** regarding the flurry of emotion.⁸²

The following letters illustrate the varying opinions of Tennessee Synod pastors attending this conference, and reveal how Tennessee accidentally got entangled into the resurrected Missouri-Ohio theological wars from over a decade earlier:

Postmark: Cherryville, NC, Nov. 3, 1893

The Free Conference was successful in many respects, still I am of the opinion that some little unfairness was used, at least, so it seemed to me. I think the most of our Tenn. brethren sided with Ohio. The Missourians made a firm stand. So did the members of the Ohio Synod. I think some of our brethren would be anxious to accept a union from Ohio. . . . Our Conference was very interesting.⁸³

Postmark: Hickory, NC, Nov. 4, 1893

Our free conference was very well conducted, and I believe has done some good, but the Mo. and Ohio men did not agree. I believe the majority of our men agreed pretty well with Ohio, but I did not. There is some talk of cooperating with them here in school and church work. Unless they come around better I cannot and will not do it. But I think they will not be able to get together very easy.⁸⁴

The only official report of this meeting stated that the subject of election was "unexpectedly and unwarrantedly brought into discussion." Circumstances and the lack of time did not permit the proper debate. There was conversation that an additional conference might be helpful, and "arrangements were at once begun." As it was still Pastor Dau's wish that Missouri and Tennessee could agree, he arranged for the facilities of Concordia College on January 3, 1894, and quickly distributed a printed circular advertising the event.⁸⁵

It became evident that another conference of the same nature would be desirable, for the purpose of discussing, ex professo, the doctrine of Election or Predestination.⁸⁶

The Conover "Free Conference" shaped the fabric of Lutheranism in Catawba County in the twentieth century and proved to be one of the more important events in Lutheran history in North Carolina. Yet it seems to have been nearly lost in obscurity, due to the controversies that surrounded it -- controversies that those outside of Catawba County wished had never occurred. Yet they did, and a semblance of a report of this meeting is mandatory for historical fidelity.

When the day arrived, "Conover was filled with visitors, conferees, and students. On the streets and in the houses nothing was heard but 'Election' and the various incidents of the occasion." This three day event attracted twenty-seven Lutheran Pastors, including nearly all serving local Missouri, Ohio, and Tennessee congregations (none known from North Carolina Synod). Ohio's E. L. S. Tressel was present from Baltimore, and visiting Missouri Pastors were J. A. Freidrich of Knoxville, C. J. Ochsclaeger of Richmond, N. J. Bakke of Concord, F. Kuegele of Koiner's Store, Va., and Herman Meyer of Greensboro. R. A. Yoder presided, with Prof. Buchheimer (Missouri) and Rev. Tressel (Ohio) as secretaries. Sessions ran from 10:00 A. M. to 3:00 P. M., and were "witnessed by the immense audience that sat and stood within and without the College chapel, giving its fixed attention to the discussion throughout the long sessions." Another report describes the attendees as "literally packed together," and listening "with quiet attention."⁸⁷

Kuegele was the primary speaker for Missouri, and he presented seven topics for discussion "to facilitate a better understanding and unity of the Lutheran Church." Immediately, "a gloom was cast" by an opponent from

82. A comprehensive report of the Hickory Free Conference could not be found. Authority for account of this and the previous paragraph is intentionally omitted. Who stated that critical events of the meeting should not be published? Who broke the silence?

83. Letter from John J. George to J. P. Stirewalt, November 3, 1893, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

84. Letter from A. L. Crouse to J. P. Stirewalt, November 4, 1893, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

85. "The Free Conference at Conover," *The Newton Enterprise*, 12 January 1894. "Reporter," *TLW*, XII:17, cited above.

86. "Free Conference Announcement," copy was included in Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

87. "The Free Conference at Conover," *The Newton Enterprise*, cited above. "Reporter," *TLW*, cited above.

Ohio, who "had come to shake Missouri and intended to shake her; Missouri was on trial and tried she would be." When Kuegele presented his first thesis,

The doctrine of the election of grace as taught and defended by Missourians must be learned from Missouri's own publications, and not from the publications of the Joint Synod of Ohio, or the quotations made in them . . .

Tressel countered with a declaration of war:

That Missouri has broken her historical connection with the Lutheran Church and occupies Calvinistic grounds.

While Missouri intended to stand on its own writings, allowance of Ohio's amendment served to introduce the writings of other Lutheran historians and theologians, and the opinions of individuals not present. In order to allow the discussions to focus on the remaining six theses of doctrine, rather than a history of re-hashed synodical bickering, this first thesis with amendment was tabled until the conference's third day. Then, for over two days, the debates centered on the scriptural and confessional interpretations of election, conversion, and predestination.⁸⁸

The principal speakers for Ohio were again Tressel and Doermann; for Missouri, they were Kuegele, Dau, and Bakke. When Kuegele was not feeling well, his debating duties fell upon Pastor Dau, "and nobly did he respond to the call. With burning zeal, thrilling eloquence and convincing arguments he carried his audience on his lips as only a genius can."⁸⁹

The conference had more than a few lively moments. The *Dietrich Catechism*, as endorsed by the Missouri Synod and others, was cited in an attempt to prove that the current Missouri teachings were inconsistent. A quotation from this book was "repeatedly and emphatically put to the Missouri pastors." J. M. Smith, who had the floor, offered Pastor Dau his time in order to debate the issue. Professor Cline openly protested, and offered time to Ohio's Prof. Doermann. Although apparently well-prepared to discuss the issue, Dau must have sensed that the orderliness of the meeting was in jeopardy, returned the time to Smith, and later defended the catechism's usage in print. Some believed that the Missourians refused to answer this question. On a later occasion, Dau stated, "I am not bound to Dietrich."⁹⁰

Another incident that brought a thrill to the audience occurred when excerpts were cited from David Henkel's, *Answer to Joseph Moore the Methodist*, defending the historical position of the Tennessee Synod, and with the claims that Henkel opposed Missouri's doctrinal position. "A man who passes for one of the ablest men in the Tennessee Synod defiantly said concerning this quotation from Rev. D. Henkel these well defined words: 'Henkel or no Henkel I want to stand by the Scriptures and confessions.'" The predominantly Tennessee Synod attendees must have been stunned by this unexpected exchange, as David Henkel's doctrinal writings had resisted all challenges from Lutherans for about seventy years, and were held in high regard by both Ohio and Tennessee.⁹¹

Near the end of the final day, the amended first thesis was re-introduced for discussion. Tressel presented "Missouri's Position on Election Historically," with the motive to prove that Missouri had left the Lutheran Church through its rejection of *intuitu fidei* -- "in view of faith." Missouri contended that it was not bound to the

88. "Reporter," *TLW*, cited above. This same account was repeated in later publications. Rev. F. Kuegele, "Has the Missouri Synod by discarding the Expression 'Election in View of Faith' broken Connection with the Historical Lutheran Church," *TLW*, XII:18, (21 February 1894), pp. 137-138; XII:19, (7 March 1894), p. 145; XII:20, (21 March 1894), pp. 153-154.

89. "The Free Conference at Conover," *The Newton Enterprise*, cited above.

90. *Review*, pp. 34-35. *Situation*, p. 38.

91. B., "Rev. David Henkel," *LS*, LI:30, 28 July 1894. *Situation*, p. 40. Author's Note: I could not find where David Henkel ever used the phrases "intuitu fidei" or "in view of faith," which seemed to be the center of much of the semantic debate on the Missouri's historical connection to the Lutheran Church. The probable disputed quotation from *Answer to Joseph Moore, the Methodist* (p. 170) is as follows: "Now if the Calvinistic doctrine of unconditional election were true, the sinner could not be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; because this doctrine supposes the sinner chosen *unto faith*, i. e. chosen not because of any foreseen faith, but chosen in order to be made a believer." In this, Henkel denounced *unto faith* as Calvinist. Henkel also wrote, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." Application of Henkel's writings to the dispute of the 1890's seems somewhat out of context.

writings of prior dogmaticians (including its own), and rested its case on the words of "Scriptures and the great Confession," which did not include the disputed phrase. The discussion had barely commenced when time ran short, prompting the public response from a non-Missouri attendee that he "had listened to the trial of Missouri for 3 days, but in his judgment the bill of indictment had not been proved." There were certainly those of the opposite opinion. The laymen were commended for the "interest these Lutherans take in doctrinal discussion in general, and in the doctrinal controversy, which has been before the Church for more than a decade, particularly."92

Rev. A. L. Crouse related this meeting to Tennessee Synod President J. P. Stirewalt:

Postmark: Hickory, NC, Jan. 6, 1894

I think the Ohioans sought all the time to take the advantage and bulldogs. The Missourians met them manfully, and defended themselves satisfactorily to me against their charge of Calvinism. . . . They did not, in the conference, fail to establish a single point from the Bible and B. C. [Book of Concord]. . . . The latter is my position, but I fear that some of our men do not agree with me. This I shall teach, but it may not satisfy some, and they may desire to remove me from my office. . . .93

The local press was of the opinion that "although the discussions were sometimes quite animated the conferees parted in good humor and without personal bitterness, as Christian pastors should."94 Perhaps the local reporter had a deadline to meet, or was bored with these discussions and did not remain until the crowd dispersed.

It was a generally-accepted rule at the Free Conferences, that one should not make statements calculated to be personally offensive to another attendee. Upon adjournment, Chairman R. A. Yoder read the following amply-signed firebrand:

We the undersigned, express it as our conviction that the doctrine expressed by the words "Intuitu Fidei," i. e., in view of the merits of Christ apprehended by faith, is in full accord with the Confessions of the Lutheran Church and the Scriptures; and that those who reject the doctrine of "Intuitu Fidei," reject therewith the doctrine of the Bible and our Confessions.95

What Yoder emphatically stated was, if you believe the same as the Missouri Synod,

YOU ARE NOT LUTHERANS!!!!

Yoder described the predictable reaction as "foolish madness" and "very harsh and severe language."96 It is doubtful that the one Constable in the Town of Conover could have, or would have, done much in Yoder's behalf. As Crouse reported:

After the formal adjournment and before the dispersion of the people, Prof. Yoder read a paper which sets down all of us who reject the Ohio position of Intuitu fidei as not being Lutheran. It was signed by all Ohioans present and Yoder, Cline, Miller, and Fritz. Moser was not present that day. Immediately I announced that it had not been presented to me; that I was not consulted. Goodman announced the same. By this time there was a stir, but George and Long said some strong things against it. I hurried out through a back window with them, and I hear that after I left there was much confusion. . . . The reading of such a paper at such a time has caused a great stir among the people. Many think it was aimed mostly at me, but Goodman, Long, and George are much dissatisfied, because they stand with me--true to the Tennessee Synod. Now is not all this sad? . . . I am afraid that the Ohioans are trying to catch some of our ministers and people. And it is now rumored here that you agree with the Ohioans . . .97

92. "Reporter," *TLW*, cited above. Kuegele, *TLW*, cited above.

93. Letter from A. L. Crouse to J. P. Stirewalt, January 6, 1894, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

94. "The Free Conference at Conover," *The Newton Enterprise*, cited above.

95. *Situation*, p. 42. The signers of this statement include five professors at Lenoir College and the following from Practical English Seminary: President G. L. Hunt; Professors Doermann and W. E. Tressel; Board members E. L. S. Tressel and J. H. Rexrode.

96. *Situation*, p. 43.

97. Crouse letter, cited above. Smith and Bernheim were also against Yoder's statement, but their loyalty to the TN Synod was in question, so might not have been included in the letter. David A. Goodman, son of Rev. Henry Goodman of Iredell Co., was licensed by the TN Synod in 1864 and was ordained in 1882. He is buried in St. John's cemetery. Rev. John Jacob George was educated at Newberry, Concordia, and Lenoir Colleges,

The Tennessee Synod, which had already been divided over the college question and the United Synod, now found itself rent asunder over doctrine, and this separation could doubtfully be repaired. Crouse fully agreed with Missouri, placing him at decided odds with his colleagues and co-founders at Lenoir College. Crouse's letter is the first citation indicating that several other pastors, outside of Conover, had aligned with the Missouri position. As Dau later stated, "The Conover Conference blasted the last hope of long looked for and prayed for peace and unity" between Ohio, Tennessee, and Missouri. This division made for some strange bed-fellows.⁹⁸

Two days later, Crouse reported unusual events taking place in Hickory, including the refusal of some theological students to attend classes, and the appearance of the President of the Concordia English District of the Ohio Synod.

Postmark: Hickory, NC, Jan. 8, 1894

I feel that it is time to be jealous for our Synod. E. L. S. Tressel came to the college this morning, and he and all the faculty were closeted about an hour. I was not asked to be present, and so remained at my post.⁹⁹

The Lutheran presses cranked up. *The Lutheran Witness*, organ for the Missouri Synod, carried a four-part series by Rev. F. Kuegele and another writer, relating the debates of the Conference and repeating Missouri's doctrinal position.

After the Conover Free Conference, the center of attention then moved from Concordia College Chapel to the St. John's Sanctuary. While the plethora of Lutheran pastors was assembled in Conover, Pastor Dau arranged for his friend, Rev. J. A. Friedrich of Knoxville, to present a sermon to St. John's. Dau had visited Friedrich the prior fall and had read one of his sermons, as originally delivered to a Mission Festival in Tennessee. When Dau heard that Friedrich planned to attend the Conover Free Conference, he requested this specific sermon to be given to his St. John's congregation. The text was from Ephesians 11:8-9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Whether the congregation was impressed with Friedrich, inspired by the sermon, encouraged by Pastor Dau, or reacted to the recent Free Conference, cannot be known with certainty; however, the Church Council requested that the sermon be published in its entirety in *Our Church Paper*. It appeared on the front page of the January 24, 1894 issue, under the title of "Missionary Sermon." While the sermon certainly contained many paragraphs pertinent to its title, it also contained many of the disputed Missouri doctrines, including the text of "by grace are ye saved through faith" or "election." It also defended Missouri's position on "refusal to co-operate not only with the sects, but even with the majority of so-called Lutheran bodies throughout the world. . . . that we of right ought to work together,--cannot be valid. . . . God bless our mission work! Amen."¹⁰⁰

The response was immediate! Lenoir College Professor R. L. Fritz picked up the theological gun, and fired a scathing bullet intended to inflict deadly wounds. He described the sermon as a "funny missionary sermon" calculated to be "a sugar-coated Election Pill," and therefore, the whole thing was "faulty." This article was on a highly theological plane, and referenced the original Greek source of Friedrich's text. He concluded his effort with "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Fritz followed with a translated sermon by Martin

as well as Columbia University. He was ordained in 1893, and was serving congregations in Gaston and Lincoln Co's. He resigned his pastorate in 1899 to enter private business. Rev. G. E. Long was also ordained in 1893, and is listed as pastor of Friendship, Alexander, Salem, possibly Alexander Co.; and St. James, possibly near Cherryville. He later aligned with the MO Synod, and served several Catawba Co. churches. From *Life Sketches*.

98. *Situation*, p. 43. Dau, "Our Work in North Carolina," *TLW*, cited above.

99. Another letter from A. L. Crouse to J. P. Stirewalt, January 8, 1894, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. Tressel's presence at a Tennessee Synod Lenoir College, closed-door meeting is strong evidence that only a few pastors remained in the area, who were aware of the events that occurred in the 1840's and 1850's -- primarily J. M. Smith of Conover.

100. J. A. Friedrich, "Missionary Sermon, Published by Special Request of the Church Council of St. John's Lutheran Church, Catawba Co., N. C.," *OCP*, XXII:4, 24 January 1894. W. H. T. Dau, "Rev. Friedrich's Sermon at St. John's Church," *OCP*, XXII:11, 14 March, 1894. W. H. T. Dau, "Rev. Friedrich's Sermon Once More," *OCP*, XXII:16, 18 April 1894.

Luther, in which he felt the "new" Missouri doctrines were refuted by the great reformer. "For many be called, but few chosen."101

Dau was only grazed and fired back, "as the sermon was preached from *my* pulpit and by *my* request, I, naturally regret the criticism." He then responded in defense of the sermon and debated many of Fritz's arguments, including the Greek grammar, which argument was surely far beyond the average reader's intelligence. He suggested strongly that Professor Fritz may have misread the intention of the sermon.102

Professor Fritz was certain to increase the circulation of *Our Church Paper* among the members of St. John's, when he unloaded another round, and described the "agitation at St. John's":

It is an easy matter to inflame and prejudice people so that they will and want to see only one side of a matter. And often leaders rejoice in and make capital of the blindness and prejudices of the common people. This I for one despise to see. . . . We cherish no ill feelings whatever towards Revs. Dau and Friedrich, and fully believe that either one, especially Mr. Dau, could write a fine missionary sermon—separate and apart from the doctrine of election.103

Dau again returned fire:

St. John's congregation is said to have been agitated on the question of election. This is, indeed, true, and, by no means, a matter for regret. I can augment the statement by saying that St. John's congregation now is serenely at peace about this doctrine, and has, thanks be to the Lord profited by the agitation. . . . And herewith I rest this entire affair, bidding my friend, the reviewer, God speed in all good pursuits which henceforth he may follow.104

Fritz, "In Conclusion," (? his last bullet ?) insisted that St. John's was not at peace. With this final word, the January sermon by Friedrich was finally lain to rest in the Lutheran press on May 2, 1894 -- making it the longest running and most controversial sermon ever preached from the pulpit of St. John's.105

During the Friedrich-Dau-Fritz duel, Pastor J. H. Rexrode, of the St. John's Ohio Synod congregation, published his response to the Friedrich Sermon in *Lutheran Standard*. Rexrode's article was of a somewhat different personality, as he confined his comments strictly to the doctrinal statements in Friedrich's sermon, and carefully avoided personalities and derogatory remarks toward the "other" St. John's congregation and her pastor.106 Dau apparently did not respond to Rexrode in print.

The pastors hit the dirt road with "Election" on their preferred sermon agenda. There can be no doubt as to the messages from Missouri's Dau or Romoser, nor Ohio's Rexrode or Doermann. Sermons from J. M. Smith become interesting. He preached a special sermon at A. L. Crouse's congregation, Friendship, Alexander County. The subject was "by request, on Election." Smith followed this with a two-week sermon on the subject at his own three congregations from July through October.107 Other pastors of the Tennessee Synod surely did the same, from their differing points of view.

Somewhat surprisingly, Pastors Smith and Bernheim, and delegates from nearly all Conover area churches, were in attendance at the North Carolina Conference meeting in April. N. E. Sigmon represented St. John's, and C. L. Coon represented Concordia. No letters, petitions, or other items of business materially affected them or their congregations, but the doctrine contained in the *Dietrich Catechism* was again discussed.108

101. R. L. Fritz, "That Missionary (?) Election Sermon," *OCF*, XXII:8, 21 February 1894; Dr. Luther, "For Many Be Called, but Few Chosen," *OCF*, XXII:11, 14 March 1894, transl. from Luther's "Werke Erlangen Ed. Vol. II, pp. 84-87, and transcr. from Prof. Schmid's translation, Vol. I, pp. 254-257."

102. Dau, *OCF*, XXII:11, cited above.

103. R. L. Fritz, "Rev. Dau's Few Remarks," *OCF*, XXII:13, 28 March 1894.

104. Dau, *OCF*, XXII:16, cited above. Relative to the St. John's agitation, Dau referred Fritz to Genesis 50:20: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."

105. R. L. Fritz, "In Conclusion," *OCF*, XXII:18, 2 May 1894.

106. J. H. Rexrode, "Letter from Claremont, N. C.," *LS*, LII:13, 31 March 1894.

107. *J. M. Smith Diary* - 1894. He preached on "Election" at Friendship on the 3rd Sunday of April, at Bethel on the 3rd Sunday of July and 2nd Sunday of August, at St. Peter's on the 3rd and 4th Sundays in August, and at Old St. Paul's on the first Sundays of September and October.

108. J. C. Wessinger, "Meeting of North Carolina Conference of the Tennessee Synod, *OCF*, XXII:19, 9 May 1894. *Situation*, p. 38.

On July 7, 1894, Pastor Dau published an article which related the events leading to the coming of Missouri to North Carolina, up through the doctrinal discussions, and the college fiscal affairs through the end of the spring term. This was generally a routine report, and was not intended to continue any controversy. Dau felt that "the violence of the storm had well nigh spent itself and the sun is beginning to scatter bright beams."¹⁰⁹ As has been seen before, when things appear to be getting quiet, such as the recent Pastor's Conference, they are about to erupt.

In August 1894, the Hickory spokesman became R. A. Yoder, who published a pamphlet entitled, *Situation in North Carolina*, with plain reference to the events surrounding Concordia College. Those who endorsed this publication were J. C. Moser, W. P. Cline, J. P. Miller, and R. L. Fritz -- all Hickory professors (minus A. L. Crouse) who sided with the Ohio Synod's views on predestination.

Our only purpose in sending forth this publication is to contribute what we can toward the defense of the pure faith of our church and toward the peace and harmony of our Synod.¹¹⁰

This noble purpose resulted in no peace or harmony around Catawba County, as Yoder proceeded to attack the Missouri Synod, the Conover proponents, the Trustees of Concordia College, J. M. Smith, C. H. Bernheim, W. H. T. Dau, George A. Romoser, five congregations, and an assortment of others. He states:

Herein too it plainly appears that self-interest and error are the manifest causes of the troubles that now vex the church here, and are unquestionably the occasion of the gross irregularities, innovations, and interferences, of which our people have such abundant reason to complain. Error and the fruits of error, misrepresentation and unwarranted intermeddling, have called forth this pamphlet.¹¹¹

There had been some trouble in the Tennessee Synod on the location of school for about sixteen years, brought about principally by Rev. J. M. Smith's determination to have the school at Conover at all hazards and against the expressed wishes of a majority of people. . . . The Missourians, taking advantage of this disaffection in the Tennessee Synod, and aided by members of the Board of Trustees, who played the part of traitors to the Tennessee Synod, secured control of the school.¹¹²

We need only remember that at that time [when Concordia was founded], there was but one Lutheran pastor, Rev. J. M. Smith, working in Catawba County, who had charge of seven congregations and was the pastor of 1250 communicants, to understand why it was [located in Conover]. And if we remember, too, that he lived within one mile of the location and had several sons ready for school, we can see a powerful motive, why he would override the wishes of the people and locate at Conover.¹¹³

Smith was accused of "this highhanded method of location," that the college's location "has been secured in the unfair manner herein set forth," and he and Bernheim were accused of "unfair and unchristian methods." Furthermore, Smith and Bernheim were accused of giving the college over "to her enemies," and Smith was described as "sole dictator in this matter of giving away the property."¹¹⁴

The College itself was described as an "unholy cause" (yet had somehow been placed under the "fostering care" of the Tennessee Synod, and had been run by the pamphlet's author for many years).¹¹⁵

Yoder continued, "Missouri is regarded as a disturbing and proselyting Synod, not only here, but also other places. She is regarded as arrogant and egotistic, not only by pastors of the Tennessee Synod, but also by many other Lutherans." Missourians were also described as "disturbers of the church," and "errorists." Why did the Missourians come to this area? "Because it is easier proselyting Lutherans, than others, when the doctrine comes under the name of Lutheran; and because this process is easier than converting the heathen."¹¹⁶

109. Dau, "Our Work in North Carolina," *TLW*, cited above.

110. *Situation*, p. 4.

111. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

112. *Ibid.*, p. 19. For accuracy, it cannot be determined from available records that "a majority of people" ever voted on either location for the college. There was no known congregational vote on the issue, and the votes of delegates varied from one meeting to another. Only a set of minutes from these meetings could confirm or deny this statement.

113. *Ibid.*, p. 7. J. M. Smith's membership was 1350, per his Journal. Smith's motive for college location to educate his sons is questionable, as his sons went out of state for their higher education.

114. *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 10, 12.

115. *Review*, p. 4.

116. *Situation*, pp. 25, 27, 28.

Concordia congregation's Call was challenged as not being "divine" because it also included the college presidency which was arranged by the Trustees, and that the voting was after "electioneering." Parishes of Sharon and St. Martin's in Iredell County submitted Calls to Romoser, and were accused of submitting an "irregular" Call and unconstitutionality, respectively. A small congregation at Glen Alpine, which had not been supplied a Pastor for over a year and had turned to the Missourians in Conover, was also attacked by Yoder. And finally, St. John's was challenged on several counts which are self-evident from the correspondence which appears later.¹¹⁷

Not a single negative phrase was aimed at then-deceased P. C. Henkel, first President of Concordia College, and early life-blood of its formation. Nobody in this dispute would dare defame his name, yet he was certainly a party to many of the earlier school organizational discussions. Henckel's involvement in the site selection was debated, but not satisfactorily proven by either party.

The release of this pamphlet turned the Tennessee Synod onto itself anew. In a letter from a pamphlet supporter:

Postmark: Hickory, NC, 18 August, 1894

I see your thesis for conference smacks somewhat of Mo. Calvinism, and if adopted as they stand will no doubt aid largely to divide our synod because it would put your conference on the side of Mo. in our trouble here. Of course, if all of your brethren have drifted into that error, the sooner we know the better. But if there are some who still adhere to the old order of interpreting the confessions I do hope that part of your conference will boldly assert itself for the truth. I await with anxiety the result of your discussion. The question is up here in N. C. and must be settled. I hope you will read Rev. Yoder's pamphlet carefully and you can see the course we mean to pursue, and also the meanness of the Mo. Synod in this country. If you adopt the themes of your conference, then the matter will come squarely up in the Synod. And let me tell you we are loaded for bear. . . . I think Rev. Wike enclosed these notes, if he does he agrees with us but not with Crouse & the Mos. . . . Now I only wish to say that our dear old Synod is seriously threatened with dissolution, let us look well to what we do, so if this sad event comes, we may have the consolation that we have above our duty. Can it be that David Henkle, P. C. Henkle and all the great theologians from the days of the Ref. to the present time, even the framers of the Formula of Concord were errorists and there are no true Lutherans in the world but Mos.. A claim so contemptible I have no words to express my thoughts. . . .¹¹⁸

Additional firewood was loaded into the steam engine at the Henkel Press. The first respondent to Yoder was Rev. Junius S. Koiner of Luray, Virginia, who had formerly been Professor of Theology at Concordia College, supply Pastor at Concordia congregation, and who had strong ties to North Carolina. He reviewed the pamphlet, and pointed out that its true purpose was to unify the opinions of the Tennessee Synod pastors who remained indifferent to the college troubles in Catawba County, North Carolina. "Let us leave the Missourians to do their work where it is needed, and attend to our own affairs."¹¹⁹ Koiner followed with both commendation and denouncement of Missouri, and a fairly stern account of the past actions of the Ohio Synod in North Carolina. Also, Koiner made doctrinal statements against Yoder's views on election or predestination, which were appended to Yoder's pamphlet. Koiner fully believed that the North Carolina pastors had allowed themselves to be drawn into the debates on "election," and felt that the Lutheran Confessions required no further definition, as this causes division, rather than unity.

Now it must seem plain to all who are not already enlisted in this bootless strife, that the controversy does not and ought never to concern our Synod, or its schools, or churches. . . . Surely our suffering churches will not be aided by a controversy upon a subject of endless disputing. And to the mind of the writer, it is plain that the interests of school and church in our Synod, yes in all our Church in the South, will not be promoted in this generation, by any alliance with either Ohio or Missouri.¹²⁰

A Hickory letter reacted to Koiner's review privately:

Postmark: Hickory, NC, 7 September 1894.

117. *Situation*, pp. 21-24. *Review*, pp. 14-21. Glen Alpine is in Burke County, North Carolina, and another source names it "Glen Alpine Station."

118. Letter from W. P. Cline to J. P. Stirewalt, 18 August 1894, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

119. J. S. Koiner, "The Situation in North Carolina," *OCP*, XXII:35, 29 August 1894.

120. J. S. Koiner, "The Situation in North Carolina," *OCP*, XXII:36, 5 September 1894.

Rev. Koerner's review of our pamphlet is a disgrace to the Church. I know Koerner is selfish and narrow-minded, and that he had been under Kuegele's influence long enough to imbibe this miserable Mo. stuff therefore affected him to differ with us on the doctrine fast, but I did think the man had some sense. Now I am thoroughly convinced that he has not. I can readily see why he is a failure in the ministry. To say the least about his review of the tract, it is mean as to principle, contemptible as to manner, and incorrect as to his statements of facts.

He pretends to lay down a rule by which we are to direct ourselves in dealing with the Missourians, and then violates his own rule in almost every sentence in his onslaught upon us and the Ohioans. He treats the pure doctrine of our Church as plainly set forth in our pamphlet in a contemptible and an ironical manner, and then coward like creeps behind the letter of the confessions to shield himself, instead of telling what he believes the Confessions teach on this troublesome subject, when any simpleton knows the agitation is not about the acceptance or non-acceptance of the confessions, but about the interpretation of them, or rather how do the confessions interpret themselves. . . . Now I am not defending Ohio, but if I am to make a choice between Ohio and Rev. Koerner every element of my Christian conscience calls to me to choose Ohio.

May the good Lord have mercy upon us and deliver us from such cranks as Koerner, and unprincipled conduct of the Missourians is my prayer. I like to see you at Synod, whoever desires to work and affiliate with Mo. must go to them. The voice of North & South Carolina will be for drawing the line, and unless I am fully deceived it will be drawn.121

The internal argument continued when Yoder responded to Koerner, and defended the pamphlet. In it he differentiated between the former actions of Ohio and the recent actions of Missouri, and challenged Koerner to state plainly his opinion of the "true Lutheran doctrine on this controverted subject."122

Koerner answered:

In case of local troubles, I think it is best not to be in them, if possible to keep out. There is apt to be some error on both sides. . . . There is no need of going beyond our Church's Confession. . . . Why should we revive their controversy in the South? . . . As to a school, our Tennessee Synod certainly needs one. I would humbly suggest that at the earliest practicable time, Synod appoint and instruct a committee to arrange for the establishment of a school to be free from either Missouri or Ohio influence.123

Meanwhile, the Ohio Synod responded favorably to *Situation in North Carolina*. In an announcement by "J. L. K." in *Lutheran Standard*:

He [Yoder] stands squarely with Ohio on predestination. He quotes from page 89 of Concordia District Minutes, 1882. The pamphlet completely unmasks Missouri. Let every one who can read English, whatever his synodical connection may be, procure a copy of this publication. We do not know the price.124

In the same issue, the front page article was, "Has the Missouri Synod Broken Her Historical Connection With the Lutheran Church on the Doctrines of Predestination?" This was authored by E. L. S. Tressel, and its date of publication coincided with the annual convention of the Tennessee Synod.125

Obviously, several items of heavy baggage were carried into the seventy-fourth convention of the Tennessee Synod, beginning on September 22, 1894. One of the primary items on the agenda was the United Synod issue, which received an "animated, but peaceable, discussion for several hours." Eventually, the motion to withdraw from the United Synod was defeated by a 31 to 20 vote, and the North Carolina "Four-Point" men had again lost.126

Then the discussion turned to the "election" issue. Church petitions, requesting that the position of the Tennessee Synod be stated in "clear, concise, and unequivocal [sic] terms," came under consideration. Some, like

121. Letter from W. P. Cline to J. P. Stirewalt, 7 September 1894, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

122. R. A. Yoder, "Rev. J. S. Koerner's 'Situation in North Carolina,'" *OCF*, XXII:37, 12 September 1894.

123. J. S. Koerner, "Rev. R. A. Yoder's 'Revising,'" *OCF*, XXII:38, 19 September 1894.

124. J. L. K., "Literature," *LS*, LII:38, 22 September 1894.

125. E. L. S. Tressel, "Has the Missouri Synod Broken Her Historical Connection With the Lutheran Church on the Doctrine of Predestination?," *LS*, LII:38, 22 September 1894.

126. J. P. Miller, "Seventy-Fourth Convention of the E. L. Tennessee Synod," *OCF*, XXII:40, 3 October 1894.

Koiner, preferred that this subject not be pursued. After debate, the vote was 26 to 21 against expression of any opinion, with most of the Virginia contingent absent due to the meeting's location in Lexington County, South Carolina.¹²⁷ Upon additional discussion, a compromise was offered, which served to leave the issue open until 1895:

Resolved, That a committee of five ministers be appointed to draw up and publish in *Our Church Paper* a declaration of the position of the Tennessee Synod relative to the doctrine of Election, and that said committee publish said declaration as soon as possible after adjournment of this Synod.¹²⁸

The committee consisted of R. A. Yoder, J. C. Moser, W. P. Cline, A. L. Crouse, and J. M. Smith -- the four founders of Lenoir College plus Smith. Even a casual observer to this chapter must conclude that Crouse (out through a back window) and Smith (founder of Concordia College) were not about to agree with the other three committeemen. Therefore, the Tennessee Synod had attempted to bury the issue inside the privately-discussed oblivion of a committee. If these five men could come out of committee with a statement of unanimity, "God works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform." In other business, which helps define Crouse's doctrinal position, "without discrediting orthodoxy, and that all cause of friction might be removed," no theological instructor was appointed for Lenoir College. The Synod discontinued all theological work at Lenoir College until further action.¹²⁹

On October 8, 1894, A. L. Crouse officially resigned his office as Professor of Theology at Lenoir College.¹³⁰

The Hickory professors continued their campaign to gain support from Virginia:

Postmark: Hickory, NC, Nov. 29, 1894

The Mos. have been become quiet, and have learnt [sic] a thing or two since they have tried to absorb this community. Our pamphlet have [sic] damaged their cause very maturely here. Rev. Smith will very likely lose several of his congregations by his having introduced these fellows into this country. Missourianisms [sic] is Calvinism issue. We are ready to meet it at any and all times. What is to [sic] matter with the Dr. [Socrates Henkel]. If he means to straddle this question and fight off a plain definition of the doctrine of election, he will do just what he does not want to do -- that is divide the Synod. Some of us are done with such foolishness.¹³¹

The writer above must have been unaware of the work being done in Conover (or would not acknowledge it). For a committee, consisting of Pastors Dau, Romoser, Smith, Bernheim, and Professors Buchheimer and Coon published a rebuttal to Yoder's pamphlet, entitled, *Review of Prof. R. A. Yoder's "Situation in North Carolina,"* in which the charges, allegations, and insults were answered. Although no date is given, this pamphlet was probably released in November 1894.

Prof. Yoder's attitude at present reminds us of the man who laid down the pasture fence and went off and neglected to watch and to keep the cattle in the pasture, and who, after the cattle had escaped, proceeded to say bad things about cattle that would not stay in the pasture where they belonged. No doubt, there are some men in Catawba county who are sorry now after they see all the disturbance they have made. Prof. Yoder by writing a pamphlet which attacks everybody whom he sees in sight, no doubt, wishes, and thinks thereby to pay the debt he owes his Synod in not preserving its peace.¹³²

127. *Ibid.* Editor, "Some Observations and Impressions," *OCP*, XXII:43, 24 October 1894.

128. Miller, *OCP*, XXII:40, cited above. Note that Miller, who was from Catawba County, used the phrase, "a kind of compromise," as he knew then the committee would never agree.

129. *Ibid.*

130. Wight, p. 101, cited from Yoder Diary.

131. Letter from W. P. Cline to J. P. Stirewalt, November 29, 1894, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

132. *Review*, p. 12. The writer of the previous letter was surely aware of its publication by the end of November, but did not mention it to the Virginia Pastor.

Included in the pamphlet was much recitation of the history of the founding of Concordia College, the purpose and reasons for the Missouri Synod's presence, and a long discourse on doctrine.

Also included were descriptions of several congregational problems that arose. Predictably, the St. John's congregation defended its position, and submitted the most lengthy (and insightful) letter describing the congregational interferences from the opposing college/synodical factions that manifest themselves from 1891 through 1894. This letter, which due to its lengthy historical account, is presented in its entirety:

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CATAWBA COUNTY, N. C.

By authority of St. John's E. L. Congregation of Catawba county, N. C., we, the undersigned, herewith make the following

Statement:

On September 2, 1894, our pastor read to our congregation that portion of Prof. Yoder's pamphlet which relates to the calling of our present pastor. After some discussion it was resolved that the charges contained in said pamphlet be publicly answered, and that the council of our church be appointed to formulate this answer and have it published. In accordance with these resolutions we offer to the public the following:

On May 20, 1893, our congregation held a meeting for the purpose of electing a pastor to succeed the Rev. C. H. Bernheim, who had resigned the office to remove to Lexington, N. C., on account of the feeble health of his wife. This meeting had been duly announced before, and was well attended. By a rule of our constitution a number of our members would have been prevented from voting. A motion was, therefore, made and carried at the beginning of the meeting, that the rules of the congregation be temporarily suspended. By this motion the side which now complains that we have acted unfairly in the calling of our present pastor, was greatly benefited; for had not this motion prevailed a number of them could not have voted at all. There were present at this meeting our then pastor, Rev. C. H. Bernheim, and Rev. J. M. Smith, both of whom are charged in the pamphlet of Prof. Yoder with "electioneering for a Missourian." The facts are these: Rev. C. H. Bernheim did in no wise betray that he sought to influence us in the choice of our pastor, and Rev. Smith was present principally to prevent his own election, as he had been informed that he would be chosen. None of those who have voted for our present pastor shall concede that they were in any wise coerced to do so; they voted with the utmost freedom, and they voted with an eye to the best interests of the congregation. There was "electioneering," if we may borrow Prof. Yoder's phrase, but that was on the other side. Mr. Silas Wike and Miss Sallie Herman (now Mrs. Holler) made it their business prior to the meeting to personally see some of our members and urge them to vote for Prof. Yoder. There were placed in nomination for the pastorate of our congregation, Prof. Dau and Prof. Yoder. The first ballot resulted in 37 votes for the former and 16 for the latter. A motion was then offered to make Prof. Dau's call unanimous, which was done, only 6 voting against the motion. It soon became painfully manifest that the oppositionists were determined to create a disturbance. Soon after our congregation learned with great sadness that a new congregation was about to be organized out of those who would not accept the services of our present pastor, and that Prof. Yoder was serving these parties at Wike's school house. Thus it will be seen, that while our part of the congregation used all efforts to prevent a rupture in the congregation, the oppositionists in every possible way widened the breach which they had made in the beginning, and clearly showed that they would not listen to God's word, when brought to bear on them by our side. The climax was reached when the opposition petitioned the Tennessee Synod for advice and assistance. None of our members have ever been able to inspect the paper which contained the petition; all that we know of it is the portion quoted in the minutes of the Tennessee Synod of 1893, and again quoted in Prof. Yoder's pamphlet on page 23. The minutes of the Tennessee Synod make this petition emanate "from St. John's E. L. Congregation;" this should read "from a small minority of the congregation." We do not mean to blame our Synod for this, for Synod probably looked at the 37 signatures of this petition, and imagined that these signatures represented about the entire congregation. In this there was not a little deception practiced. In the first place we wish to state that the 37 members are not voting members, we cannot even say that they are communing members; or members in good standing, because we have never seen the paper. None of the gentlemen whom Prof. Yoder mentions as his informers on page 22, excepting [sic] Mr. Silas Wike, were consistent members of our congregation. Our opponents ought to publish the paper with all the signatures. The reason why we know that those 37 members are not all voting members is this: Mr. L. E. Warren, one of the signers of that paper, afterwards in a meeting of our congregation stated that he had signed the paper not knowing and understanding the contents thereof, that he was sorry he had permitted his name to be affixed to this paper and should like to have it erased, if this could be done. At his house 2 more signatures were obtained, that of his wife and his mother-in-law, Mrs. Price. The latter lady related the following at Mr. Noah Brady's house: The petition was brought to her house and the bearer of the same read from it to prove that the Missouri Synod was teaching Calvinistic doctrine regarding election and on the strength of that they had permitted their names to be affixed to the document.—Our congregation holds that the petitioners should first have tried to have the matter settled in our congregation before they carried it to Synod; and that, after Synod had appointed a committee to investigate this matter, the committee, at least, should have called our congregation and also the petitioners together, and after hearing both sides, should have rendered their decision, without ever giving us a

hearing and have advised the petitioners to organize their own congregation. We claim that the committee have not discharged the duty imposed on them. We leave it to all impartial men to say how such action ought to be termed. In conclusion, we would say, that Prof. Yoder is wrong in claiming that the calling of our present pastor has divided our congregation. The truth is, that for ten years we have not had a pastor under whom we were more united than under the one we have now. There has been trouble in our congregation for at least ten years, and both Profs. Yoder, and Moser, who endorses the pamphlet of Prof. Yoder, know of them, for they were personally concerned in them. More might be said, but this will suffice.

N. E. SIGMON
N. E. BRADY
B. E. SMITH
F. J. DELLINGER
J. J. CLINE133

Interferences into congregational affairs of St. John's and several other congregations can be no more clearly presented than this letter. Smith and Bernheim were present, Yoder and Moser were mentioned, Missouri became involved, and parties went door to door in the congregation to gather support and ultimately divide the congregation. The congregation still referred to the Tennessee Synod as "our Synod."

Review must have inflamed Professor Yoder, as he quickly placed pen to paper, and a series of eight articles appeared in *Our Church Paper* from November 28, 1894 through January 23, 1895.¹³⁴ He begins:

The Review . . . is, in the main, an admission of the facts set forth in our pamphlet. The effort of the committee is an attempt to explain and modify these facts so as to justify the gross irregularities that have been perpetrated upon the church in this section. But there are some statements in the "Review" that truth and justice will not permit to stand uncontradicted.¹³⁵

While Yoder corrected several historical inaccuracies, his personal vendetta against Conover, Missouri, and anyone so associated, reached such a pitch that the editor issued the calm admonition to avoid "improper personalities, and offensive, or abusive language;" otherwise, the subject would be closed.¹³⁶

Yoder repeated his assertions that Missourians were proselytes, and "that Missouri does not want *one* church, pastor, or member, but *all*, the whole Synod; and to begin by taking a few individuals would be *poor* policy."¹³⁷

Yoder's final three installments included further discussion on the doctrine of election, with confessional and historical citations defending the phrase, "in view of faith." He cited letters from P. C. Henkel to Dr. F. A. Schmidt (Ohio) and Rev. L. M. Wagner (Missouri), in attempt to prove that Henkel was in agreement with "in view of faith," and opposed to Missouri.¹³⁸

The past opinions of the deceased P. C. Henkel were again disputed. Later, a letter dated 1885 surfaced, whereby Henkel stated his opinion of the principal Missouri and Ohio opponents:

I am sorry that Dr. Walther [Missouri] has taken the position he has. . . . I and Schmidt [Ohio] are still a unit . . . This departure on his [Walther's] part has done immense mischief, and I fear that party will never become right. . . . You certainly have the right to protest against error and to expose it.¹³⁹

133. *Review*, pp. 17-19. Women were not voting members in the congregation, and their signing of a synodical petition in this year would have been certainly questionable.

134. *Situation-OCF*.

135. *Ibid*.

136. *Ibid*.

137. *Ibid*.

138. *Ibid*.

139. R. A. Yoder, "Was Dr. P. C. Henkel a Missourian on the Subject of Election," *OCF*, XXIII:16, 17 April 1895.

Immediately followed 1889 correspondence from Rev. L. M. Wagner, of Gravelton, Missouri, to Henkel. Wagner was in the English Conference in that state and was interested in the possibilities of cooperating with the Tennessee Synod for benefit of training its English ministers in Conover. However, if he were to be called as a professor, Wagner did not wish to join the Tennessee Synod while it was yet a member of the United Synod. On May 29, 1889, during a period of declining health, Henkel replied -- partially as written by his daughter:

I fully approve of the idea you suggest in regard to the Tennessee Synod coming out of that United (rather divided) Synod. . . .
[written by his daughter] Father also further requests that you hold yourself in reserve as it is very likely that you will yet be called to the work here, even in the school.¹⁴⁰

As P. C. Henkel was considering a Missouri Pastor for professorship at Concordia College, A. L. Crouse concluded the P. C. Henkel debate: "Just now this may be enough to interest our readers for a season."¹⁴¹ The Henkel issue was now closed forever, as it should have been long before.

The Tennessee Synod President was kept informed about local sentiments:

Postmark: Hickory, NC, Dec. 17, 1894

I certainly rejoice to learn you express yourself favorably towards Rev. Yoder's effort to meet this great conspiracy against our synod and pure Lutheranism in this country. I am sorry to see Dr. S. has in his dotage acted so inconsistently in this trouble. He has written to us that both are wrong (O. & Mos.) while he has written to Rev. J. M. Smith endorsing his position. Such duplicity is to be regretted. I have almost lost hope for our Va. brethren since it seemed they have determined to leave us alone in this fight to throw the coils of the Mos., but your letter somewhat revived my drooping spirits, and I do hope that when this "burning question" [is] ventilated in our synod, she will take decided position against this Calvinistic tendency of Mo. If in the event the synod should by a compromise position or agreeing with Mo. then a number of us will have to seek a synodical home elsewhere. . . . I found it impossible to ever do anything in the way of progress in this county unless the church was taken out of the hands of Smith & Bernheim. We made this school fight to get rid of them. We would have easily done it but for these Missourians. . . . The committee to draw up a declaration on election met last Thursday. I do not think Crouse & Smith will agree with the rest. . . .¹⁴²

After another doctrinal committee meeting:

Postmark: Hickory, NC, Dec. 28, 1894

There is no hope of getting together in the committee. Crouse and Smith are hopeless Missourians. I do pray that your brethren will come to our rescue next meeting and rid us down here of this trouble. All a very large majority of our people want is an opinion from the Synod and we can soon rid the church of these fellows.¹⁴³

These two letters probably offer more insight into the underlying problems and personal motives of the Tennessee Synod Lutherans in Catawba County than any previously published church history of this era.

The five-man Committee, appointed to agree on a doctrinal statement on election, proved to be a predictable failure and waste of time. Crouse and Smith offered to drop Missouri's expression, "unto faith," but the remainder of the Committee would not agree to the compromise. On January 2, 1895, the Committee released a lengthy "Declaration," which was signed by Yoder, Cline, and Moser. Upon formal protest, appended was a "Declaration of the Minority," as formulated by Smith and Crouse. The majority generally agreed with the Ohio Synod's position, and the minority, with Missouri. The stalemate was now destined to land back on the floor of the Tennessee Synod with no clear committee recommendation whatsoever.¹⁴⁴

140. A. L. Crouse, "That Dr. P. C. Henkel Matter," *OCF* XXIII:19, 8 May 1895.

141. *Ibid.*

142. Letter from W. P. Cline to J. P. Stirewalt, December 17, 1894, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

143. Letter from W. P. Cline to J. P. Stirewalt, December 28, 1894, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

144. R. A. Yoder, W. P. Cline, J. C. Moser, "Declaration of the Position of the Tennessee Synod on the Subject of Election, or Predestination," *OCF* XXIII:5, 30 January 1895, to which is appended: J. M. Smith, A. L. Crouse, "Declaration of the Minority." A. L. Crouse, "The Discussion in

During the summer of 1895, the heat of weather was only surpassed by that of the printed word, when the Hickory pen was passed to Professor W. P. Cline.

... we have concluded to defy the heat, hard times, and every other hindrance [sic], and let the world know we are still alive, and ready for any change in this disturbed region that our barometer may indicate. ... On the one side we have an Ohio current running swiftly towards the sea of free grace. Then there is a strong counter current of Missouri, rushing on towards the bleak cold mountain of Calvinism. ... One would naturally conclude that destruction and ruin would lie in the wake of these ecclesiastical storms, but this is not really the fact. ... The subject of election is before our Synod. It has wrought division and confusion. ... Will the Synod abide [by] her constitution, and detect and expose the error evidently found in one or the other of these views? ... What will be the result if Synod defines herself? ... Respectability ... peace and unity in the church. Let the Synod declare what is her view on this disputed subject, and then those who differ with her if they have any manhood will go where they belong. If they do not, it will then be the duty of the Synod to send them. If the Synod says we are wrong, there shall be no further trouble in the matter.¹⁴⁵

Although the Missouri Synod itself seemed unusually quiet, the actions of the Joint Synod of Ohio were certainly not to be ignored. At its eighteenth annual convention of the Concordia English District in 1894, the Ohio congregation at St. John's offered its facilities for the next meeting, and this offer was accepted -- presumably to bring the "burning question" before the Lutherans in Catawba County once again.¹⁴⁶

During the 1894-1895 school year, E. L. S. Tressel was elected president of Practical English Seminary and was also elected president of the Concordia English District. Rather than at St. John's, the 1895 District meeting was moved to a sister congregation and its new building, St. Mark's in Claremont, and was held on September 19-24.¹⁴⁷ Election of other District officers resulted in a Catawba County slate of Professor H. K. G. Doermann (Practical English Seminary), Rev. C. D. Besch (Hickory), Rev. J. H. Rexrode (St. John's, St. Mark's, and Mt. Zion pastor), and Prof. F. H. Patzer (Practical English Seminary).¹⁴⁸

The sessions were divided into morning and afternoon, with the mornings to be spent in discussion of the proposed attachment to the minutes, entitled *Theses on Conversion*. And thus, the Concordia District was preparing to enter the publication contest with Tennessee and Missouri. Professors Yoder and Fritz, of Lenoir College, were "present during some of the sessions of Synod, and were accorded the privileges of the floor."¹⁴⁹ President Tressel's report set the tone for the conference:

One of the great doctrines of our holy religion is before us for discussion. We mean conversion. The particular reason for treating this doctrine here and now is a peculiar one. There are those in this immediate vicinity bearing the name Lutheran and claiming to hold the symbols of the Lutheran Church with fidelity, who are at the same time separated into two hostile camps.

Some few years ago in this country a party bearing the Lutheran name rejected the form of expression and the doctrine which that form expressed which had stood as the Lutheran shibboleth for ages, "election in view of faith" and adopted the Calvinistic expression "election to faith" and with it a number of the essential features of pure Calvinism which this expression sets forth, and by implication others of the same sort.

... in so far they are no longer Lutherans but Calvinists. This type of Lutherans has found its way to North Carolina and we, who hold the historic, symbolic and scriptural doctrine of election and conversion are branded as synergists.

... A doctrine of conversion constructed on these lines is not historical in the Lutheran Church, is not the doctrine of her symbols, nor of the divine Word.¹⁵⁰

the Tennessee Synod of the Doctrine of Election," *OCP* XXIV:13, 1 April 1896.

145. W. P. Cline, "An Ecclesiastical Cyclone," *OCP* XXIII:28, 10 July 1895.

146. *Minutes Eighteenth Annual convention of the Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Phomel's Ev. Lutheran Church, Rockingham Co., Va., from July 25-30, 1894*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1895), p. 60.

147. *Minutes of the Nineteenth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church, Claremont, N. C., September 19-24, 1895*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1896), p. 3. *Catalogue of the Educational Institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and other States*, with subtitle, "St. Paul's Practical Theological Seminary, Hickory, N. C.," (Columbus, Ohio: 1895), no page numbers.

148. *Concordia District Minutes - 1895*, p. 4.

149. *Ibid.*

150. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-6.

Professor H. K. G. Doermann wrote twenty-five pages of text on the subject, wherein the Concordia District continued its opposition to Missouri. A few excerpts indicate the message:

If Missouri will persist in charging us with synergism . . . they must remember that they are charging God Himself with false doctrine, denying and blaspheming His Word, which is horrible!

She [Missouri] holds on this point, if not exactly the Calvinistic doctrine, one that is very closely related to it.

No reasoning could induce the Joint Synod of Ohio to turn away from the comforting truth of the gospel for which the Lutheran Church contended during the past centuries of her history, and to exchange it for Calvinistic errors which her teachers have again and again exposed and refuted from the Holy Scriptures.

So far as the Joint Synod of Ohio is concerned, it is utterly vain to argue that after all our explanations there are still difficulties in our doctrine of conversion which would be escaped by adopting the Calvinistic system.¹⁵¹

To recapitulate the major publications on conversion, election, and/or pre-destination:

1. *Situation in North Carolina*, by Lenoir College President, R. A. Yoder, and endorsed by four other professors. Further Yoder writings of similar content were published in *Our Church Paper*, after the next.
2. *Review of R. A. Yoder's 'Situation in North Carolina,'* by Concordia College President, W. H. T. Dau and others. Other writings in *The Lutheran Witness*, by English Missouri Synod President F. Kuegele and others.
3. *Theses on Conversion*, by St. Paul's Seminary Professor, H. K. G. Doermann, with obvious input by Concordia District President E. L. S. Tressel, who published many earlier articles in *Lutheran Standard*.

Is it by coincidence, convenience, or scholarship that the sources of these major publications on predestination were principally written by the heads of the three competing Lutheran colleges in Catawba County?

The Concordia District Meeting in Claremont proved to be a warm-up for the 1895 Tennessee Synod Meeting, scheduled for the following weekend in Hickory. Present at the opening sessions were twenty-four Tennessee Synod pastors (nineteen from North Carolina) and fifty-five lay delegates -- seventy-nine voting members. Five pastors were present from the Ohio Synod, as were Pastors Dau and R. W. Huebsch, from the Missouri Synod.¹⁵²

On the Thursday prior to Synod, the conflicting declarations of the "Election Committee" were presented to a colloquium of pastors. Delegate N. E. Sigman represented the St. John's congregation and reported that there was "much controversy" as to whether the discussions on Election would be public or private. Finally, it was decided that the delegates could hear the discussions, but not ask questions. On Friday, the debates ensued, but no consensus of opinion came forth.¹⁵³

Rev. P. C. Wike, first valedictorian of Concordia College, but now a resident of Virginia, was elected to the thankless office of Tennessee Synod President, with J. P. Miller, J. C. Moser, and R. A. Yoder, the other officers for the upcoming year. A group of pastors, who did not wish to discuss Election as presented by the committee report and its protest, offered the following resolution which they believed should settle the matter:

Resolved, That as a substitute for the reports of committee now before the house, this Synod hereby reaffirm her adherence to the Confessions of the Church on the subject of Election.¹⁵⁴

Naturally, the substitute motion carried almost unanimously. But this proved insufficient, and the following motion was then allowed, entered, and carried:

151. *Ibid.*, pp. 10-34.

152. J. P. Miller, "The Meeting of Synod," *OCF* XXIII:41, 9 October 1895; "Proceedings of the Tennessee Synod," *OCF* XXIII:42, 16 October 1895.

153. *Ibid.* Crouse, p. 30; transcr., p. 18. *CMB I*, p. 32.

154. *OCF* XXIII:42, cited above.

Resolved, That inasmuch as the phrase, **in view of faith**, has been commonly used by the soundest theologians of the Lutheran church in speaking of particular election of individual men; . . . therefore, this body cannot, and does not, by any action here taken condemn the phrase, **in view of faith**; but on the other hand we reject the expression, **elected unto faith**, as a phrase peculiar to Calvinistic theology, and prior to the last fifteen years, almost unknown in the past history of the Lutheran Church.¹⁵⁵

With most of the voters being from North Carolina, the motion passed by a 52 to 23 majority, and the Tennessee Synod had officially taken the position of Ohio and denounced Missouri. One of the minority declared "that the old mother had torn down her old beautiful flag and hoisted a miserable rag."¹⁵⁶

This action was not to provide respectability, peace, or unity, as wished by W. P. Cline in his article above. At the fourth session on Monday, J. M. Smith read a formal protest against the action of Synod. The chair ruled that it be printed in the minutes, but that no further action be taken. After an appeal, the majority overruled this decision, and the protest was not published. A committee was appointed to consult with the dissenting pastors. When their report returned and was discussed on the floor, the vote was 51 to 16:

WHEREAS, We have just heard through the committee appointed to confer with them, that Revs. A. L. Crouse, J. M. Smith, C. H. Bernheim, D. C. Huffman, and G. E. Long have positively refused to fellowship and cooperate with this Synod, it is with regret that we are compelled to recognize the fact that these pastors have by their own action placed themselves in an abnormal relation to this body; we therefore in view of this fact earnestly invite them to return to fellowship and co-operation with the Synod; and until they shall have done so, it is the sense of this body, that they can have no voice in the transactions of this Synod.¹⁵⁷

This list represents two of St. John's former pastors, Smith and Bernheim. By silencing these pastors, including some of the Synod's "elders," the Tennessee Synod purged itself of the loudest dissenting voices, and accomplished a significant changing of the guard. Synod then proceeded to accept Lenoir College, and agreed "to give the said college her hearty moral and financial support." Rev. Yoder was appointed the new Theological Instructor, at a salary of \$150.00 per year. The following was then passed:

WHEREAS, Certain congregations in connection with this Synod have pastors who neither affiliate nor co-operate with the Synod; therefore

Resolved, That we earnestly recommend that such congregations dismiss said pastors and call others who will affiliate and co-operate with us.¹⁵⁸

Would the ten or more congregations follow this recommendation? Or would they defend their pastors? Most (if not all) were not well-pleased, and St. John's immediately sent a communication to Concordia congregation, inquiring as to whether it wished to form a conference of churches protesting the doctrinal position of the Tennessee Synod.¹⁵⁹

Throughout this period of time, Pastor Dau and other Missouri Pastors, had remained aloof from area Synods. By 1895, not one obstacle had been removed from Pastor Dau's original objections to joining the Tennessee Synod. The United Synod issue had become a comedy to an outside observer from Catawba County. At its 1895 meeting, the Tennessee Synod letter of censure regarding Article III and the "Four Points" was finally lain on the table at the United Synod:

From The Ev. Lutheran Tennessee Synod to the Ev. Lutheran United Synod in the South, Through her President:

Whereas, the action taken at the last meeting of the United Synod upon the Regulations for Work does not meet the approval of this Synod, therefore, be it

155. *Ibid.*

156. *Ibid.* J. R. Peterson, "Communicated," *OCP* XXIV:8, 26 February 1896.

157. *OCP* XXIII:42, cited above.

158. *Ibid.*

159. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 32. The St. Stephen's congregation had a strongly worded letter of protest published (*OCP* XXIV:8, 26 February 1896), wherein they charged the Synod with violation of its Constitution and departure from the Confessions and Scripture. They defended their pastor (A. L. Crouse) and delegate (S. E. Spencer).

Resolved, That this body enters its protest against said action, and requests the United Synod to again consider and adopt the regulations as reported by the Committee to the Savannah meeting, and that the Secretary forward this action to the President of the United Synod.

P. C. WIKE,

Recording Secretary of the Ev. Lutheran Tenn. Synod.¹⁶⁰

The committee recommendation, which was adopted, thought it "unwise to open the discussion of the question at this time."¹⁶¹ The "Four Points" was now officially dead.

Lenoir College, Concordia, and the college in Dallas failed to submit reports to the United Synod. No local pastor or delegate appeared at the meeting. From the Parochial Table, the Tennessee Synod was the largest member of the United Synod, but financially contributed the smallest of all synods into the United Synod treasury.¹⁶²

The doctrinal matters had escalated to the point that the Tennessee Synod congregations around Conover were now forced to choose sides. St. John's could stay with the Tennessee Synod or align with its Pastor and join the Missouri Synod. The St. John's decision was slow, but etched in granite.

On February 3, 1896, Secretary C. O. Smith read the following to the St. John's Lutherans:

The following resolutions adopted item by item:—

I. Election: Resolved that we do not endorse the declaration of the Tenn. Synod relative to election as stated on page 10 of the minutes of its last convention at Hickory, because said declaration is a violation of the Bible and the Confessions.

II. Pastor: and resolved that consequently we express our regret over the action of Synod affecting the following ministers: Revs. A. L. Crouse, J. M. Smith, C. H. Bernheim, D. C. Huffman, and G. E. Long.

III. Our Advice of Synod: Resolve that this meeting advise the congregation which have been asked by the Tenn. Synod to dismiss their pastors to retain said pastors, viz., Revs. A. L. Crouse, C. H. Bernheim, J. M. Smith, G. E. Long, D. C. Huffman, W. H. T. Dau, Geo. A. Romoser, L. Buchheimer, R. W. Huebsch, G. Luecke, and C. A. Weiss, as long as said pastors adhere to the doctrines of the Bible & the Confessions.

IV. And Resolved, that we do not regard the vote of a majority as binding in matters of doctrine, and therefore, we shall regard our relation to the Tenn. Synod as dissolved, provided the Tenn. Synod at its next convention does not repeal the aforementioned resolutions.¹⁶³

After seventy-five years, the Tennessee Synod had forgotten one of the major principles of its foundation, as contained in the fourth resolution above. This was one of the prime distinctions David Henkel fought for in 1820, and the Synod he helped found had fallen into the same trap -- the vote of the majority on matters of doctrine.

Other area congregations, whose pastors were silenced, felt similarly, and other petitions were sent to Synod. But the next regular synod meeting was a year away, and there was an ample supply of ink, paper, and printable subject matter in New Market.

By January 1896, the Tennessee Synod was challenged due to its decision on "the Election Controversy" based on the majority vote. A writer who styled himself as "A Layman" stated, "It seems that the whole Tennessee Synod in North Carolina is in error on this doctrine."¹⁶⁴ "A Farmer's Son" followed:

No where in my Bible do I find that I am saved in view of my faith in Christ. . . . This being true what is the use for any one to be puzzling their brains over this question? There are enough weak-kneed Lutherans in our different churches already without our ministers making any more. This doctrine of election is an old song they have been blowing through their bugles until its last note is worn out. . . . Let those who preach, preach Christ the crucified, and they will have plenty to do . . .¹⁶⁵

160. *Minutes of the Fifth Convention of the United Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the South Held In Christ Church Staunton, Va., September 18-21, 1895*, (Asheville: Southern Lutheran Printing Co., 1895), p. 69, from the J. E. Barb collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

161. *Ibid.*

162. *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 66, 74-75.

163. *Church Minute Book I.*

164. A Layman, "A Query," *OCP XXIV*:2, 15 January 1896.

165. A Farmer's Son, "An Answer to a Query," *OCP XXIV*:7, 19 February 1896.

Again, Rev. J. S. Koerner became the principal spokesman against the previous transactions. Koerner, who sided with the Missouri doctrine, believed that "the party in the Synod . . . on the side of Ohio" set historical precedent by deciding matters of doctrine by the majority. "The evil of division threatens to follow this unfortunate action." 166

Koerner relentlessly submitted articles to *Our Church Paper*, requesting Synod to rescind its Election Declaration. He squarely placed the blame where it lay--on the "irregular effort" to remove the college, resulting in Missouri's arrival; on Missouri and Ohio for re-engagement of the doctrinal battles; and on the Tennessee Pastorate for choosing sides and contesting the issue along lines of college partisanship. In most instances, his presentations were of a doctrinal or policy nature, and were not intended as personal attacks or confrontations with specific brethren of either party to the dispute. His typical message was as follows:

The true doctrine of election may be stated, explained, and believed without using either of these expressions ["in view of faith" or "unto faith"]. Perhaps both of them might be used correctly in discussing the doctrine, if used with the proper definitions and due limitations. . . . As a Synod, we need neither of them. . . . It is forever settled in heaven. 167

An appeal also came from the senior Pastor of the Tennessee Synod, "Father" Jesse R. Peterson of Gaston County, who had been a pastor for fifty years and felt perfectly content to offer his opinion on the subject, as founded on the Scriptures. Although he personally favored the direction that the Synod took on Election, he regretted that the matter was aired in Synod at all, and felt that adherence to the words of the Confessions was sufficient. He also questioned where a true theologian could now be found in either party to settle the matter. "for such a judge would certainly decide in favor of his friends and against his adversary." Peterson's ultimate goal was to heal the wounds and re-unite the Synod in the work of the Lord. 168

The calmer tones of voice were now gaining some influence over the zealots in Catawba County. The responses from Hickory came from J. C. Moser, who stated that the majority had not taken a position with Ohio, but defended "in view of faith" as taught by the Lutheran dogmatists in the theological books approved by the Synod, as taught at Lenoir College and other respected institutions. However, Moser preferred strongly to "reject the new teaching of Missouri." 169 A. L. Crouse reminded Moser of a statement made by R. A. Yoder to an Ohio Synod pastor: "Yes, we have agreed, and we call each other brethren now." 170 With a great level of respect for his friend, mentor, and former pastor, Koerner reminded Moser of the Conover Free Conference and the controversial declaration signed by both Hickory and Ohio Pastors. "Let us hope for the best, and let us labor for a true, abiding peace." 171

"A Farmer's Son" repeated his pleas for someone to "please be so kind as to show me where the Bible sets forth this doctrine which I am opposing. . . . It [the division] is not the fault of the Bible. It teaches the same truth and doctrine today as it did when there was no division at all." 172 Another writer stated, "The Church has a right to know where the truth lies. Whether the truth is with Ohio or Missouri does not concern the earnest seeker after the truth. These foreign matters only create prejudice and partisan strife and will not result in bringing out the truth." 173

On nearly a weekly basis, Koerner persisted with calm warnings, and theological insight:

166. J. S. Koerner, "Our Tennessee Synod," *OCF* XXIV:2, 15 January 1896.

167. J. S. Koerner, "Letter to a Layman," *OCF* XXIV:7, 19 February 1896; "Rev. J. R. Peterson's Communication," *OCF* XXIV:9, 4 March 1896.

168. J. R. Peterson, "Communicated," *OCF* XXIV:8, 26 February 1896.

169. J. C. Moser, "The Election Controversy," *OCF* XXIV:9, 4 March 1896.

170. A. L. Crouse, "The Discussion in the Tennessee Synod of the Doctrine of Election," *OCF* XXIV:13, 1 April 1896.

171. J. S. Koerner, "Rev. Prof. J. C. Moser on 'The Election Controversy,'" *OCF* XXIV:11, 18 March 1896.

172. A Farmer's Son, "Communicated," *OCF* XXIV:11, 18 March 1896.

173. A Lover of the Truth, "The Election Controversy," *OCF* XXIV:13, 1 April 1896.

The real issue before the churches of the Tennessee Synod is not to condemn the position on the phrases of any other Synod, nor yet is it to discuss the doctrine of predestination or election. The question is whether the churches will abide by a decision of the Synod at its last meeting.174

Predestination, or the election of grace. . . . is an unchangeable act of God, and to us a great mystery. . . . One man believes and is saved: this is all of God's election. Another man abodes in unbelief and is lost: why was not he one of the elect? The question is not for man to ask or to answer.175

The Lutheran Church prescribes no opinions in her Confessions. Religious opinions she leaves for the world, the sects, and the devil, i. e., for the parties who prize them and feed souls with them.176

But surely no ambiguous phrase should be used in defining a Synod's doctrinal position.177

And for purposes of public teaching and synodical confession we shall hardly improve on the statements of these doctrines made in the Formula of Concord.178

Father Peterson expressed,

Before persons engage in controversy, it would be well for them carefully to compare views to ascertain how far they agree, and then confine themselves to points of real difference.179

Although disagreeing politely in doctrine, Koerner echoed his friend's sentiments:

Had this been observed as a rule of discussion by all the disputants in our recent Lutheran controversy on election, most of the waste of time and talent might have been avoided.180

A week or so before the 1896 Tennessee Synod Meeting, Reverend Junius S. Koerner repeated his calm, but firm, admonition:

Right motives and good intentions are most needful. We have no right to meet in the name of the Lord Jesus and invoke the guidance of his Spirit, unless resolved to submit personal pleasure to the will of God. We know that his will is that we follow after peace and holiness and his honor. . . . The breaking up of our Synod, indeed, seems probable, if the work of the majority at last year's meeting is to stand. . . . Let us hope, and let all in the churches pray, that they may be led by the Spirit of peace and of truth to consent to the rescinding of their resolution concerning election. That done, all else might easily be harmonized.181

As the St. John's Tennessee Synod congregation anxiously awaited delivery of *Our Church Paper* each week, its pastors of both Missouri and Ohio Synod congregations remained remarkably silent, as the Tennessee Synod was sorting out its own affairs by way of the Lutheran media. There must have also been great anticipation of the transactions of the upcoming Synod Meeting. Would the Tennessee Synod respond favorably to the petition from St. John's, and retract its objectionable resolutions of the prior year -- including the reinstatement of the five pastors? Would Koerner's prophecy of the breaking up of the Synod occur?

Reverend P. C. Wike, as out-going President, preached the opening sermon of the 76th convention of the Tennessee Synod in Tom's Brook, Virginia, on August 22, 1896. There was some trepidation that this convention may be its last. The election issue was discussed nearly all Monday afternoon, and the following resolution was adopted nearly unanimously as a substitute for that of the previous year:

174. J. S. Koerner, "The Reason Why: Review Notes, etc." *OCF* XXIV:15, 15 April 1896.

175. J. S. Koerner, "The Phrases and the True Doctrine," *OCF* XXIV:18, 6 May 1896.

176. J. S. Koerner, "Rev. J. R. Peterson on Election," *OCF* XXIV:19, 13 May 1896.

177. *Ibid.*

178. *Ibid.*

179. *Ibid.*

180. *Ibid.*

181. J. S. Koerner, "Tennessee Synod," *OCF* XXIV:32, 12 August 1896.

That when used with the proper limitations and qualifications, we do not condemn either the phrase "in view of faith" or "unto faith" in explaining the doctrine of election, guarding the former against Synergistic inferences and the latter against Calvinistic tendencies.¹⁸²

Another schism within the Tennessee Synod was somewhat averted. Would Pastor Dau and St. John's be agreeable to this compromise of language, and allowance of the Missouri Synod phrase, "unto faith," to be used with caution?

When the petitions from St. John's and other disgruntled congregations reached the floor on Tuesday morning, there was strong opposition to reading them aloud. After a close vote, the petitions were finally read, but no action whatsoever was taken! Synod chose not to reinstate the five pastors nor to remove the recommendation that her congregations dismiss them.¹⁸³

While the objectionable language was removed from the Election Declaration, the gun sights were aimed directly at the Missouri Synod on Tuesday afternoon:

WHEREAS, When they took charge of that work [Concordia College], Rev. F. Kuegele, the recognized leader of said English District, promised that, if their presence proved hurtful to the unity and progress of the Tennessee Synod, **they would abandon the work**, and

WHEREAS, This promise has not yet been fulfilled, but to the contrary those congregations have been influenced to think of dissolving their connection with the Tennessee Synod; therefore

Resolved, That we do earnestly request those pastors do comply with such promise and abandon that work, or connect themselves with the Tennessee Synod and actively affiliate with her.¹⁸⁴

Inasmuch as it appears from the Minutes of our Synod that certain ministers in the service of the mission board of the Missouri Synod have been, and are missionating in the midst of our Synod; and, inasmuch as the above named ministers have been devoting their chief efforts to proselyting instead of converting those outside of the church, therefore, be it

Resolved, 1. That we request the mission board of the Missouri Synod to withdraw the above named ministers from within our territories.

2. That our secretary be instructed to send these resolutions to the mission board of the English District of the Missouri Synod.¹⁸⁵

No comment was published in *Our Church Paper* relative to the five ousted Pastors.

Back at St. John's, the Tennessee Synod's recent actions were read at the next two monthly meetings, but action was postponed, pending receipt of the official report. On December 20, 1896, St. John's made good on its promise, and voted 16 to 4 to withdraw from the Tennessee Synod. On February 7, 1897, upon motion for withdrawal, the vote was made unanimous, and secretary F. E. Sigman was instructed to notify the synod accordingly.¹⁸⁶

For several months, the congregation held no synodical affiliation, although in reality, it had not supported the Tennessee Synod financially or otherwise for several years. At the July 24, 1896 voters meeting, a decision was finally made. After a reading of both the Missouri and Tennessee Synod constitutions, St. John's Lutheran Church applied for membership in the English Missouri Synod, and elected P. M. Dellinger as its first delegate.¹⁸⁷ She was accepted by that Synod at the following meeting, and St. John's became the only original founding congregation of the old North Carolina Synod to align with the Missouri Synod to the date of this writing. The first North Carolina congregation to join the Tennessee Synod had moved its allegiance to Missouri, and the Missouri Synod's newest member was a Church about fifty years older than the original German Synod itself.

182. "Transactions of the Tennessee Synod," *OCF* XXIV:34, 26 August 1896. A. L. Crouse, "Proceedings of the Tennessee Synod," *OCF* XXIV:35, 2 September 1896.

183. *Ibid.*

184. *Ibid.*

185. *Ibid.*

186. *CMB I*.

187. *Ibid.*

HAS ANYONE READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13 LATELY?

During the 1895 Concordia English District meeting at Claremont, amid the predestination controversy, another attitude, that perplexed both Lutheran congregations at St. John's and neighboring churches since the arrival of the Ohio Synod, was again promulgated in President Tressel's Report:

. . . We want converted children of God in our congregations, none others. We wish to grant Christian privileges alone to those whose hearts have been turned from Satan unto God. . . . The mere expression of a desire to associate himself with us is not sufficient for the admission of a man into church fellowship. 188

During the summer of 1896, there appeared an interesting report from a visiting Tennessee Synod Pastor, that expounds on the unfortunate state of church fellowship, and confirms the condition of the Lutheran Church in Catawba County.

Postmark: Headquarters, VA, July 3rd, 1896

But, as our visit took us into what is now known as "burnt" district of N. C. (owing to the School and election trouble that has been burning there for some time), we learned some things anyway. . . . I will yet state that the Lutheran Church there in Catawba what was once the Tenn. Synod is virtually divided into four separate and distinct factions. 1st Missourians, 2nd Semi-Missourians, 3rd Ohioans, 4th Semi-Ohioans, so separate and distinct are these factions that a member of a congregation of one faction can not get a letter of transfer to a congregation in any of the other factions -- no matter how far isolated from his home cong. and how near he may be to a cong. in one of the other faction. If you want to see sticklerism four pointism gone to seed there you have it. The sects and even the world are looking down upon them with frown.

The inquiry may arise in your mind where is the Tenn. Synod in that part of the Country? if it exists there at all [sic] it is in some of the border districts and in that class of which I wrote you, who said they were unwilling to submit to Ohio dictatorship. 189

A few years later, the fires raged on:

Postmark: Hickory, NC, February 1899.

The Missourians are still doing well by fading out in our section. Rev. Darr takes charge of old Sharon in Iredell Co. This congregation had been until recently under charge of a Mo. Pastor. Rev. Sox & I think will [sic] soon have old St. Peter's, the last of Rev. Smith's congregations. Smith will then have only a few fragments. They have no pastor at Conover after having called three. They are gone, along with the Ohioans.

We soon should have the field. If we can rid ourselves of the M. Synod "mess" we then can say at least some of our troubles are behind us. 190

Au contraire, the "M. Synod mess" was here to stay, and so were the Ohioans.

For well over a decade following the college dispute, the doctrinal issues were kept in the forefront by the three Lutheran colleges operating in this County. Further free conferences were held, with one at Mt. Zion Lutheran Church near Conover in 1902. From a Missouri Synod report:

. . . The purpose now seemed to be to exhibit no more difference between Ohio and Missouri than just enough to justify Ohio's separation from us. Much attention was given to other matters. The unsafe position and practice of the United Synod was carefully shown.

188. *Concordia District Minutes - 1895*, p. 6.

189. Letter from Rev. A. L. Bolick to J. P. Stirewalt, July 3, 1896, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University.

190. Letter from W. P. Cline to J. P. Stirewalt, February, 1899, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University. "They are gone" is not accurate. Although Concordia congregation did not have a called Pastor at that time, a full slate of Professors, including Dau and Romoser, were present at the College and served its pulpit. Although J. M. Smith had resigned from his congregations, he was certainly not "gone." However, it is true that the Ohio Synod had closed Practical English Seminary for a few years.

Rev. E. L. S. Tressel, President of the Concordia District, was the principal speaker. He referred to the presence of the three Synods in this vicinity, which have no fellowship nor co-operation with one another. He declared that he had grieved over this state of things. He said that there is no people in this land he would rather have fellowship with than the Missourians, if we could say we are all one. But on the doctrine of predestination, said the speaker, on that alone we cannot agree. . . . 191

In 1906, Ohio's Concordia English District was still hurling the "Calvinism" label at Missouri, and included thirty pages on predestination in its Synod Minutes - the purpose of which seems to re-hash the old debate and keep it on the minds of the people.¹⁹²

The various disputes surrounding personal differences, colleges, congregations, synods, and Lutheran doctrine caused a drastic change in the character of the Churches in the area. By 1902, the St. John's group that Rev. R. A. Yoder encouraged at Wike's School House was formally organized with 29 charter members. Their first church building was completed by 1903, and was dedicated as Mt. Calvary in Claremont, where Rev. Yoder was pastor until 1905. The congregation at St. Peter's split between Missouri and Tennessee, with both congregations meeting in the same church at alternating times. The Tennessee minority later formed St. Luke's, which was located near County Home Road, then on Houston Mill Road, and later, on Springs Road. The Bethel congregation split, with the short-lived church named Salem (or Arndt's) Church being organized near the Catawba river north of Bethel. Early pastors, or supply pastors, were Yoder, J. C. Moser, R. L. Fritz, and others from Hickory. St. Stephen's, Missouri Synod, was formed when A. L. Crouse was given "no voice" by the Tennessee Synod, creating a third Lutheran congregation at the same intersection on Springs Road. Old St. Paul's split again, with Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, and a Reformed congregation alternating Sundays in its two-story log building. Ebenezer was organized southeast of the Town of Conover, possibly due to this disruption. Friendship, in Alexander County, appears to have favored the Missouri Synod by their call to A. L. Crouse, but maintained an independent status for many years. Other congregations may have divided, and many who remained united had internal unrest.¹⁹³

The turmoil of the not-so-gay 1890's did no small amount of damage to the Lutheran pastorate in this area, particularly those involved in the college affairs. Revs. J. M. Smith, C. H. Bernheim, and G. E. Long were dropped from the Tennessee Synod's roster after they were accepted by the Missouri Synod in 1897. Smith delivered one parting shot by submitting a formal letter of withdrawal, which was referred, with the withdrawal of St. John's and several other congregations, to a special committee. Rev. J. S. Koerner's St. Mark's congregation, in Luray, Virginia, submitted a letter of withdrawal at this same meeting. The special committee deemed that this and other congregational withdrawals "were irregular, and may prove detrimental to the best interests of the whole church. . . . a lack of loyalty was productive of great harm, and often causes disturbances and disintegrations and troubles, which are hard to overcome and heal." Koerner joined the Missouri Synod in 1899, Rev. A. L. Crouse followed in 1903, and Rev. D. A. Goodman, in 1907. Rev. D. C. Huffman, who had transferred from the Ohio to Tennessee Synod in 1885, returned to the Ohio Synod. Rev. J. P. Miller, Concordia College graduate and Lenoir College Professor, soon transferred to the North Carolina Synod.¹⁹⁴ When pulpit vacancies occurred, particularly in Missouri and Ohio congregations, it often proved very difficult to fill them.¹⁹⁵

Does this dark Lutheran cloud have a silver lining? Is there the slightest possible benefit to area Lutherans from the turmoil and hatred of this period? Yes!

After the local proselytizing subsided somewhat, the three Synods became intensely involved in mission work in other locales. Arrival of Missouri awakened the Tennessee Synod with regard to its previously-neglected

191. J. S. Koerner, "Divergence of Ohio from Missouri," *TLW*, Vol. XXII, No. 5, (26 Feb. 1903), pp. 36-37.

192. *Minutes of the Thirtieth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District, held at Hickory, North Carolina, September 19-25, 1906*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1907), p. 17, thesis is attached to minutes.

193. Morgan, p. 172-3, 207-8, 246, 305-306, 341-2. Several listings were obtained from various "Mission Reports" from the North Carolina Pastors Conference minutes, as published in *OCF*. Crouse related Friendship's uncertainty in his 1905 *Historical Sketch* of that Church. *J. C. Maser Journal*, 1895-1896.

194. *Life Sketches*, many pages. "Tennessee Synod Meeting," *OCF*, XXV:48, 1 December 1897. "Tennessee Synod Meeting, Continued," *OCF*, XXV:49, 8 December 1897. Other minor sources were used.

195. The Missouri congregations at Concordia and St. John's had great difficulties securing a pastor in 1899, and the St. John's Ohio congregation had trouble filling its pulpit on several occasions in the 1890's and the next decades.

small congregations, and it actively provided supply services to them. New missions were established in several towns that were forming along the railroads, including St. Martin's of Maiden, and congregations in Morganton, Statesville, Kings Mountain, and Linville. These efforts proved successful.

New churches which were organized and aligned with the Missouri Synod during this era include Immanuel, near Conover, and Augustana, near Hickory. Christ congregation was formed from a nucleus of Concordia members living in Hickory. Missouri established missions in Greensboro, Asheville, Winston-Salem, and other locations, and there was a major effort devoted to Negro missions -- previously, largely ignored by Ohio and Tennessee.

Ohio established new congregations of Mt. Zion, St. Mark's, and St. Paul's (Hickory) during the era after their arrival, and the small congregation of Thiatyra, near the Island Ford, was supplied by their pastors until it dissolved.

Churches in the southern and western part of Catawba County, as well as those from Lincoln and Gaston Counties, remained relatively unscathed by these developments, as with few exceptions, most remained in the Tennessee Synod. Curiously, not a single congregation of Lutherans in Catawba, Lincoln, or Gaston Counties was a member of the parent (or grand-parent) North Carolina Synod at this time.¹⁹⁶

The Joint Synod of Ohio's institution, Practical English Seminary had promise of growth in the middle 1890's. In the latter half of this decade, the Ohio Synod was questioning the school's benefits to the larger educational program. At the 1896 Joint Synod meeting, the Synod found itself facing a considerable debt. Some wished to abolish the Seminaries in St. Paul (Minnesota) and Hickory, and a committee was appointed to consider it. The committee report was entered in form of a motion, "that the honorable Synod do not yet abolish these seminaries." A substitute motion was entered to consolidate the theological seminaries, and to use St. Paul and Hickory as "preparatory feeders to Columbus." Arguments in favor were, "with our present arrangement, it is impossible to give our students a thorough theological training," and that it required "three full-time professors to teach theology." Opponents argued, "It is the money question, our financial embarrassment, that has brought this agitation forward." After much discussion, the substitute motion was defeated, and the original committee recommendation was adopted.¹⁹⁷

A month later, the Concordia English District meeting was held in Shenandoah County, Virginia, and the Seminary topic emerged again. A movement was started to set up a mission board in the South.

... there will be no less than six graduates from the said Seminary next year. What shall we do with them? Send them back to the plow! It would be folly to educate these men at expense of the Joint Synod and not employ them in the cause for which they were educated ...¹⁹⁸

Due to finances, the glut of pastors, and some congregational limitations in providing financial support for its pastorate, the Seminary department was closed in 1898. The school was immediately re-organized as a preparatory school under Rev. J. H. Wannemacher, renamed St. Paul's Academy, and St. John's pastor L. P. Propes was appointed to the Board. This seemed to revive local interest in the institution, enrollment grew back to about forty-five students for the year 1899-1900, and the Joint Synod resumed support of the effort at its 1900 annual meeting, with Pastor L. M. Hunt installed as its president, and Rev. J. E. Barb as a professor, on June 12, 1901.¹⁹⁹

A seminary department was re-opened in 1907, causing much elation for the Concordia District and the local supporters. This revitalization was short-lived, as the Joint Synod resolved that "the Academy at Hickory be closed, the property be sold and the proceeds invested as a fund for another academy in Concordia District until it

196. The Beth-Eden congregation of Newton, only three miles south of Conover, remained outside the controversy.

197. *Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Biennial Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio & Other States, held in Dayton, Ohio, from Sept. 3rd to Sept. 10th, 1896*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1896), pp. 104-106.

198. *Minutes of the Twentieth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Patmos Church, Calvary, Shenandoah Co., Va., from October 14 to 19, 1896*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1896), pp. 67-68.

199. *Minutes of the Twenty-Third Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in St. Michael's Church, Sugar Grove, West Virginia, May 24-29, 1899*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1899), p. 50. *Minutes of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Mt. Zion Church, Catawba Co., N. C., September 18 to 24, 1901*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1901), p. 8.

shall have found a more suitable place for such an institution."²⁰⁰ This move seems to have been partially due to the local competition for Lutheran students posed by Lenoir and Concordia Colleges. Also, there was another movement towards consolidation of the synod's seminary efforts to the institutions at Columbus, Ohio, and St. Paul, Minnesota.

The request to close the Seminary and sell its assets was not received favorably, and at the 1912 Joint Synod Convention, Board members Dasher, Bumgarner, and Hamrick resigned, stating that they had a reluctance to follow the Synod's "behest." The reasons given were that they could not "conscientiously act as agents of the sale of this property;" there were still a large number of Ohio Lutherans in the area, and closing of the Seminary would indicate "abandonment" of the region; and that there was a small congregation of eighty members worshipping there. Three new board members were appointed, and an offer was made to loan the congregation \$3,000 to build a church of their own. Concordia District of the Joint Synod of Ohio attempted to maintain ownership of the property, via its Home Mission Board. Finally, the property was sold on September 22, 1914, for \$12,250.00, and St. Paul's Academy became a part of local history of Lutheran higher education. In 1916, partially using the proceeds of the sale of the Hickory property, an institution was opened in Petersburg, West Virginia, "that within a radius of 50 miles, there is no school of higher education in operation."²⁰¹

Now . . . to complete the Concordia College story . . . Concordia College continued to be supported, alternating between enthusiastically and reluctantly, by the Missouri Synod. It was always supported by the membership at St. John's, as many, many persons on Concordia's student rosters were from this Church. Several St. John's members served on the Board of Trustees at various times, St. John's-born Pastors C. O. Smith and Fred Rockett served as professors, and the former also served as its interim President. Many Concordia professors served as pastors to the St. John's congregation. The status of the college varied, based on attendance, war, and depression from the equivalent of a high school to that of a junior college.²⁰²

When the Missouri Synod set up a committee to investigate the possibilities of one central college in 1908, St. John's was decidedly not in favor:

- 1st Because we believe that Concordia College can amply accommodate Synod's Ministerial Students;
 - 2nd, because Concordia College can be maintained at much less expense at Conover than elsewhere,
 - 3rd because Concordia College is needed to carry on our Synod's work in this part of the Country--
 - 4th We believe that the building and maintaining of a Central College would be to [sic] heavy burden on Synod.
- By instruction of St. Johns Congregation this action is reported to you through the undersigned Committee.

Paul Bischoff, Chr.

P. M. Dellinger
B. E. Smith
N. E. Sigman
N. E. Brady
H. J. Reitzel²⁰³

Again in 1918, when threats to the college arose, a committee of five was appointed to represent St. John's. When it was determined to build a professor's house and girls' dormitory (with little synodical support), the St. John's congregation participated. When the dormitory was completed, the members of St. John's "pounded" it.

200. Barger, pp. 23-33.

201. *Ibid.*, p. 33. *Minutes of the Forty-First Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, Held at Dayton, Ohio from the 22nd to the 28th of August, 1912*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1912), pp. 21-22, 123, 146. *Minutes of the Forty-Second Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Detroit, Mich., from August 27 to September 2, 1914*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1914), p. 140. *Minutes of the Forty-Third Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Sandusky, Ohio, from August 24th to 30th, 1916*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1916), pp. 129-130, 143.

202. A roster of one-time Concordia Professors who served as Called Pastors at St. John's is as follows: TN Synod: P. C. Henkel, J. C. Moser, C. H. Bernheim. MO: W. H. T. Dau, G. E. Mennen, O. W. Kreinheder, C. F. Fredericks, O. W. H. Lindemeyer, George Dolak, F. W. Rockett, J. L. Summers, and perennial supply C. O. Smith. A list of Concordia Trustees from St. John's cannot be reconstructed with certainty.

203. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 104-105.

When a shortfall occurred in payment for the dormitory, St. John's pledged and later raised an additional \$300.00.²⁰⁴

In the 1930's, the country was steeped in depression, and synodical budgets suffered accordingly. Concordia College had become an expensive proposition for the Missouri Synod during these critical economic conditions. A committee was formed to examine the closing of one or more of its three junior colleges.

On the early morning of April 16, 1935, the workers of Conover Furniture were assembling outside prior to their work shift. A few were standing on the fire escape from the upper floor, as loud screams pierced the air from the direction of the College. As their attentions turned, they saw smoke coming from the belfry . . .

THE COLLEGE WAS ON FIRE!!!

The first to arrive were the Janitor, the Professors, and neighbors. The Boys' Dormitory unloaded quickly. Early attempts to put out the fire proved futile, so the brave volunteers entered the building and began to remove its contents. One of the main efforts was directed towards the large and heavy piano, which eventually was dismantled, and spared. "Let that piano alone and get these books out!!!!!!!" was shouted during the fire's confusion.²⁰⁵

When the Conover Fire Department arrived, its primitive municipal water system displayed its inadequacy for fire prevention. The pumper dispatched from Hickory, although arriving very quickly, proved to be too little too late. Firemen eventually concerned themselves with protection of neighboring structures, and control of woods and brush fires that flared up.

The book rescue crew consisted primarily of Concordia College professors Smith, Lindemeyer, and St. John's Pastor Fred Rockett. The remainder of the courageous citizens were pre-occupied with removing items that could be materially replaced, such as the benches. The three professors were run out by the firemen, thinking that the cupola was certain to crash down around them. Their rescue efforts were aborted. All stood outside in a state of horror, as the bell tower fell in the opposite direction.²⁰⁶

St. John's member, Ila Smith, who lived one block from the College, vividly recounted that day. Her husband, Glenn, was one of the community volunteers who responded to the sight and smell of smoke that morning, and helped remove furniture. After reflection, she continued, "I wonder how many books they could have saved, if they hadn't been worried about that piano!"²⁰⁷

Ila Smith's memory and insight was remembered time and time again while writing the last few pages. This was especially true, after encountering the following 1903 quotation from *The Lutheran Witness*, when the fire's tragedy became apparent. Under the heading of "Acknowledgements":

Received with thanks for Concordia College Library: . . . from Mrs. P. C. Lail, Conover, N. C., forty-four volumes of miscellaneous writings and a large number of Synodical Minutes and other pamphlets; . . .²⁰⁸

Mrs. Lail was a great benefactor to Concordia College Library, as she donated what was very likely the "attic trunk" from her father -- Dr. Rev. Prof. Cyprian Polycarp Henkel! She was his only descendant who lived near Conover. This was invaluable material to the College, to the Lutheran Church, and certainly to the congregations in this area of North Carolina. She must have known that. What better place for this material to be permanently housed than in the College Library that was a dream of her father? Documentation of at least one half century of Catawba County Lutheranism, and maybe considerably more if P. C. Henkel had possession of the 190 volumes described in David Henkel's estate papers, went up in smoke on one tragic day in 1935.²⁰⁹

204. *Ibid.*, pp. 181, 200, 204, 213, 214.

205. Conversation with Helen Hunicke by Mark Smith, 12 March 1994.

206. Conversation with Rev. Fred Rockett by Mark Smith, December 1993.

207. Conversation with Ila Smith by Mark Smith, 1993.

208. Under the heading "Acknowledgements," *TLW*, XXII:8, (9 April 1903), p. 64.

209. During the course of this research, NOT ONE book or pamphlet has surfaced, with the name P. C. Henkel written inside the front cover -- nor that of David Henkel. A few (certainly not 190) of David Henkel's pamphlets may exist in his papers at various repositories.

The Synod, which had pledged \$95,000, and later \$105,000, towards the construction of a new "fireproof administration building," declined to fund reconstruction, and the once-proud, once-defiant, and usually-controversial Concordia College reverted to a park.²¹⁰

The few salvaged books were dispersed among faculty and students, and scattered across the countryside like the smoke of 1935. A few volumes and certain records have returned to the Concordia congregation, and some of their seared and tattered edges bear testament to a fire.

The saga of the St. John's Lutherans contained in the past two chapters is incredible, and has taken many words to convey. The turf wars that were inherent in the early formation of Concordia College led to personal vendettas, Synodical wars, and later theological wars. And the ultimate result to the St. John's Tennessee Lutherans was alignment of the remaining congregation with the English Missouri Synod, where a church nearly one hundred years old was placed under the advice of a "missionary board." Nevertheless, the new alignment proved satisfactory. When St. John's joined the Missouri Synod, the Tennessee Synod, which St. John's had boldly supported and defended for decades, ceased to be part of its history.

The area of Catawba County remained the most notably divided region of Lutherans in the state (and possibly the country) for many years, with Tennessee, Ohio, and Missouri all maintaining a vigorous competition. When the Tennessee Synod aligned with the United Synod of the South in 1886, its relations with the old North Carolina Synod gradually improved. This cooperation reached its climax in 1921, when the once-alloof Tennessee Synod, who for many years had resisted alliances with other Lutheran bodies, merged with the North Carolina Synod to form the United Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina. This greatly strengthened the Lutheran base of North Carolina support for Lenoir College, while Concordia's fortunes swelled and faded due to decisions made half a continent away.²¹¹

In retrospection, the dreams of Rev. J. M. Smith and Dr. P. C. Henkel came true, and memorials to these men can be found on the stained glass windows of the chapel of Concordia Church. Concordia College graduated 52 Lutheran Ministers of the Gospel, and many, many, leading citizens in the Catawba County area.²¹² The Practical English Seminary also made significant contributions to the Lutheran ministry and to Catawba County culture, including four or five Pastors to the Ohio Lutheran Congregation at St. John's.

The move from Conover to Hickory, that caused such consternation, ill-will, and the arrival of the once-despised Missourians in the 1890's, offered much more freedom for growth and prosperity of a College. The Lutherans at St. John's can hold their heads high to know that they hosted the first official meeting of the Conover college in 1877, and they hosted the Concordia District meeting of 1886 when the movement for the Practical English Seminary was begun in earnest. St. John's was one of the major driving forces to see the mission of Lutheran higher education accomplished, although its fruition was not within the original design of either Lutheran congregation.

The most successful local Lutheran educational effort of the late nineteenth century became Lenoir Rhyne College, which remains under the guidance of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America -- as the leading Lutheran College in North Carolina. Its overall benefits to its scholars, the church, and the community are inestimable.

He healeth the broken in heart and bindeth up their wounds. Psalms 147:3

210. *The Concordian*, 1928, pp. 11, 21. *The Carillon*, 1930, p. 42.

211. Morgan pp. 91-103, 360-383.

212. Voigt, p. 72.

Chapter 11

THE HORSE AND THE HOUSE

Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. Luke 19:30

As the citizens around St. John's entered the 1890's, the following items could be read in *The Newton Enterprise*, for a subscription price of \$1.00 per year:¹

Mr. Silas Wike says he can stand on his front porch and see 10,000 bushels of wheat in shocks in his and his neighbors' fields. It would push the famous Western wheat fields to beat this.

There are about forty brandy distilleries running in this county.

The supervisors of Clines Township were ordered to let out the contract to build a bridge across Lyles Creek near John Simmon's and have it built and report to the board on the next first Monday.

Our Chief has fallen. . . . Jefferson Davis died at 12:45 A. M., December 6, 1889. . . . It is also fortunate that his life was prolonged to this time for the reason that Southern people can now pay him the tribute he deserves without being accused of disloyalty.

There was a box of possums in town one day this week selling for 25 cents apiece. Many of our friends who have a weakness for possum say it was cheaper to buy than to catch them, and were not slow in investing.

. . . and the day may not be very distant when the two towns [Newton and Conover] will be one. . . . There were also other festivities but dancing is a forbidden pastime at this quiet place [Concordia College].

The Lutherans have also a flourishing school, Concordia College, on the W. N. C. Railroad, where a sash and blind factory and several sawmills do a fine business.

It seems there has been some wrangling here concerning the college, but a new faculty is now in charge and is laying the foundation for an excellent school.

The Town of Conover had, in its own way, attempted to be fairly progressive, and used the college as its primary attraction. A public relations campaign was begun, broadcasting the merits of the Catawba County area, the climate, the land, the unusual opportunity for Lutheran education, and the attractiveness for new business enterprises and homes. They actively recruited "men of energy" and "capital" to Conover. The Conover Improvement Association was organized, and offered to furnish a printed circular to anyone contemplating a move to the south. St. John's Pastor, C. H. Bernheim, was President of the Association, with J. F. Hunsucker, as Secretary.²

The decade also marked events of major significance to the St. John's Lutherans. Upon the resignation of Pastor Moser, and after a year's supply by Smith, the congregation held a meeting on February 17, 1889, for purposes of calling a new pastor. With "moral and Christian support as well as pecuniary support," the congregation petitioned for the services of C. H. Bernheim to preach twice per month and perform "all things that

1. *The Newton Enterprise*, 14 June 1889, 30 August 1889, 27 September 1889, 4 October 1889, 13 November 1889, 13 January 1893.

2. R. A. Yoder, "Western North Carolina—Home for Lutherans," *OCP*, XVII:26, 26 June 1889.

pertain to his office." Bernheim was also serving the new St. Timothy congregation, and two congregations in Alexander County. He resigned from the ministry in Alexander, and accepted the Call to St. John's.³

Pastor C. H. Bernheim's tenure is not recorded with great detail. He was born April 6, 1831, at Cologne, Germany to the parents, Reverend John H. and Lisetta Bernheim. A year later, his family immigrated to this country and lived in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He graduated from the theological seminary in Lancaster, South Carolina in 1855 and was ordained by the South Carolina Synod in 1858. After the Civil War, he relocated to North Carolina, was appointed as visiting delegate to the Tennessee Synod meetings, and made associations with others of this area. He connected himself with the work at Concordia College in the early 1880's, became Pastor of St. Timothy Church in 1888, and soon became a College Trustee and a strong ally of J. M. Smith. However, he may not have been the perfect selection as a pastor to St. John's at this time, as the following biographical sketch suggests:

As a preacher he was impressive, throwing all his power into the preaching of the word of his God. Of an impulsive and decisive temperament he sometimes, as pastor, failed, perhaps, to appreciate the doubts and misgivings of more shrinking and hesitating natures and his words would seem harsh and cold.⁴

A. L. Crouse once related a discussion between Bernheim and Rev. James Pool, a Baptist preacher -- probably over the sacrament of Holy Baptism. One of Crouse's parishioners stated that "Bernheim was not very courteous to Pool, while, of course, he made the clearer and stronger arguments."⁵ His personality weakness has been no more clearly presented than his confrontation with R. A. Yoder over removal of the college, and his outburst at the Special Synod meeting at St. James Church -- which have been presented in a previous chapter.

Nevertheless, after a period of several years of being a stagnant congregation in outside-the-church affairs, St. John's began to host special events under Bernheim. During the last weekend in March of 1890, St. John's hosted the local Pastors' Conference, in which all except three pastors were in attendance. On Thursday, sessions opened with divine services, and a sermon by Rev. J. P. Price, after which, business transactions and doctrinal discussions ensued, and continued through Friday.⁶

Saturday was a special occasion, which began with an installation sermon, delivered by Professor R. A. Yoder. This was followed by the installation service itself, and the two senior pastors of the Conference, Timothy Moser and J. R. Peterson, installed Charles Herman Bernheim as pastor of St. John's, St. Timothy, and Philadelphia.⁷

But many were in anticipation for the events of the fifth Sunday of March, as the new brick Church building, subject of so much disagreement for many years, "was dedicated to the service of the Triune God," with the dedication sermon being preached by former Pastor J. C. Moser, from the text that begins, "Beautiful for situation the joy of the whole earth." After confession and absolution, Holy Communion was administered to the large congregation present.⁸

Pastor Bernheim also inspired the Sunday School program, and during his first year, it experienced "phenomenal growth." On August 16, 1890, St. John's was host to a joint Sunday School festival, with the neighboring congregations of Concordia and St. Timothy joining in the festivities. The following is a report of this occasion:

The first address was by Mr. J. T. Miller. He made a good talk on Sunday School work. Brother Miller was followed by Mr. H. A. Herman, who also made some pertinent remarks on the subject. The third speaker was Rev. Prof. J. G. Schaid. He, in his usual animated mood, spoke for about half an hour on the necessity of sound and wholesome teaching of the young. Next was given a good talk by Rev. J. M. Smith. His remarks were intended principally for the little ones. Father Smith scarcely ever fails to interest the children.

3. CBI.

4. George A. Romoser, "In Memoriam," *TLW*, Vol. XIX, No. 18, 21 February 1901, p.139. *Life Sketches*, pp. 20-21.

5. Crouse, *Friendship Sketch*, p. 42, repr. p. 25.

6. J. F. Moser, "Proceedings of the N. C. Conference of the Tennessee Synod," *OCP*, XVII:17, 30 April 1890.

7. *Ibid*.

8. *Ibid*. J. C. Moser *Journal* #1 - 1890. This latter source cites the text of the dedication sermon as Psalm 48:2.

An intermission was now given for refreshments. After the table was ready all the Sunday school children marched to it in a double line. They were led by their pastor, Rev. C. H. Bernheim, and his most excellent lady. The table, which was three hundred feet long, was well loaded with good things to eat. We think every mouth was filled.

After the pleasure of this repast, the congregation assembled in the church. Rev. J. P. Miller made a short talk to the children, exhorting them to faithfulness in the Sunday school work. The last was a speech by Prof. W. A. Smith. Prof. Smith has quite recently arrived home from a three years' stay in Germany, where he has been pursuing a course in Chemistry and Philosophy. By request, he spoke of the "Fatherland" and its customs and peculiarities. He also told us much that was interesting about the educational system of Germany and the state of the church. This address, which occupied about one hour, was well attended.

Special praise is due the choir of St. John's for the good music furnished. Miss Sallie Herman was organist.⁹

The Sunday School Celebration was considered a "success in every way." And why not?!? How much good food can be put on a table three hundred feet long?!? How much preparation and lumber did it take to build this table? How could any mouth not have been filled?!?

The remainder of Pastor Bernheim's pastorate at St. John's was engulfed by the storm surrounding Concordia College, but a regular ministry to the congregation was maintained.

The true reason for Bernheim's resignation in 1893 is unclear. With all of the problems surrounding the St. John's congregation, the last thing it needed was an intrusion of partisan politics. The Populist Party was organized in 1892, and the movement gained great momentum in Catawba County. The Democratic Party in power scorned this movement in no uncertain terms, and the political rallies offered the typical insulting rhetoric towards the opposition. Bernheim, who was present at the July Court in Newton to hear Democrats Mason and Robbins speak, was asked his opinion of the Robbins speech by one of his parishioners from St. Timothy -- one who supported the opposing party. Bernheim replied to the particularly offensive speech, "Fine, it suits me exactly." Bernheim soon became a hot topic of conversation at St. Timothy, as many felt that he endorsed the "vulgar and foul" statements of the Democrat. After several church meetings, Andrew Holler, J. L. Miller, and others, were alleged to have stated "that all they had against him was politics." The meeting was terminated, as Bernheim stated "he would have nothing to do with discussing politics in a house of the Lord." This sequence of events was flatly denied by the St. Timothy congregation. Eventually, Bernheim was pressed to tender his resignation to St. Timothy, which he did reluctantly, and it was accepted on February 26, 1893.¹⁰

An article had appeared in *The Newton Enterprise* on Friday previous to the resignation, entitled "Third Partyism Run Mad," describing a portion of the events leading up to the resignation. The members of St. Timothy defended themselves, and a second article was published under the title, "A Denial that Admits About Everything." The congregation adamantly denied that politics had been involved in the Bernheim resignation, but rather "morality." One private meeting had been called to attempt to unify the congregation under Bernheim, and was not intended "to discuss the unpardonable sin of their pastor of endorsing Democratic speeches," as had been charged.¹¹

Bernheim submitted a third article to the *Enterprise*, attempting to vindicate his actions. He made several assertions against prominent members of St. Timothy, and represented the entire affair as "politics." This only served to unify most against him, and convince but a few towards his position.¹²

St. Timothy called Rev. J. P. Miller, another Democrat, of the Tennessee Synod and the new Lenoir College, with a public statement being issued, that if they "were looking for a third party pastor, they will have to leave the Lutheran church or go a long way off to find one."¹³

At the December 1892 Pastors' Conference, something triggered an emotional flurry by Pastor Bernheim, when he publicly asserted "that some members of Conference were guilty of gross sins." This was the first Conference after the Tennessee Synod Meeting in which support was withdrawn from Concordia College, but the

9. J. P. Miller, "Sunday-school Celebration," *OCP*, XVIII:36, 10 September 1890.

10. Miller, pp. 2-3. *The Newton Enterprise*, several articles: "Third Partyism Run Mad," 24 February 1893; "A Denial that Admits About Everything," 10 March 1893; "Third Partyism Run Mad Proved," by Bernheim, 24 March 1893.

11. *Ibid.* *The Newton Enterprise* was undeniably a staunch Democratic Newspaper, and changing the title or text of a "Populist" letter would not be beyond the press's practice of the day.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

brief account of the incident did not state the circumstances surrounding Bernheim's outburst. At the next meeting on the last weekend of April, Pastor Bernheim was formally challenged by A. L. Crouse to prove his statements to be true, or to retract his "public defamation of Christian ministers." Eventually, due to many tactical delays, the passage of time, and other more pressing matters, the resolution was dropped and there was no public apology.¹⁴

By May 20, after the press wars between Bernheim and St. Timothy, and amid the formal charges by A. L. Crouse, St. John's accepted Pastor Bernheim's resignation, with his reasons being the ill health of his wife. He soon moved in with his daughter in Lexington but later returned to reside in Conover.¹⁵

On May 20, 1893, Missouri Synod Pastor W. H. T. Dau was called by the St. John's congregation. He was then the pastor at Concordia congregation, President of Concordia College, and part of the new faculty described in the newspaper account above. He accepted, was soon installed, and preached his first sermon on July 30, from 2 Corinthians 1:24:

Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

Dau was reassuring the people that he was not attempting to pry them from the Tennessee Synod in favor of Missouri, nor from the historical confessions that they believed -- as had been suggested by some.

Under its new leader, the congregation began use of a new "Church Book," formed a new membership list, and adopted a new constitution. Voting members were required to sign their names to the constitution.

Dau did not find a positive situation, as much congregational unrest remained from the perpetual series of problems it and the college had faced during the preceding decade. There was some vocal resistance to Dau and the other Missouri Synod pastors, which caused the loss of a few more families. The communion list of the Spring of 1893 dropped to only 46 families and single individuals, or a total of 78 communicants. This represents the lowest attendance since the Civil War. Subscriptions for the pastor's salary decreased from about \$130.00 per year during Bernheim's pastorate to only \$73.50 in 1894. Fortunately for St. John's, Dau's primary salary was derived from his work at Concordia College, and he endeavored to re-build the bedraggled congregation. He proved to be somewhat successful in his efforts and attendance and financial situations improved moderately, as communicants averaged 106 for the next four years, and the pastor's salary increased to about \$110.00 by 1898. The 1895 confirmation class boasted seventeen new members.¹⁶

The Missouri Synod pastors and a few others who were in disaffection with the Tennessee Synod formed an organization known as the "Augustana Conference." Regular meetings were held in a rotation of the churches, and specific topics of theology were discussed. These yearly meetings usually were up to three or four days in length. Portions were private and offered the Pastors the opportunity for doctrinal and secular discussions on various topics of current interest, such as revivalism, prohibition, dancing, secret societies (lodges), and Romanism. They usually concluded with a meeting open to the public, and regular church services. St. John's made its facilities available for use by this Conference for a meeting of 1895, before the congregation joined the Missouri Synod.¹⁷

On one occasion, as a part of commencement week festivities at the College, the "Augustana" pastors and professors made an ill-advised challenge to the students for a game of baseball, whereupon they were "most gloriously whipped" by a team that included several youth from St. John's.¹⁸

The Missouri Synod, which had made considerable mission efforts in the Negro communities of North Carolina, also had a conference known as the Immanuel Conference which often met in the area. One of its

14. L. L. Lohr, "Conference," *OCF*, XXI:19, 10 May 1893.

15. Miller, p. 3. *CBI*. Bernheim's services were subscribed for the entire year of 1893.

16. *CBI* is the source for the communion and subscription statistics for this Chapter, and this footnote is not repeated for similar information. *Church Book II*, St. John's Lutheran Church, began during this era, and was used for logging of baptisms, marriages and funerals, hereafter cited as *CBII*. After 1899, communions were also recorded in this book.

17. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 26-27.

18. *The Newton Enterprise*, June 1894. Rev. Meyer (Greensboro), left field; Rev. Foilrich (Knoxville), center field; Prof. Buchheimer, captain, 3rd base; Prof. Coon, 2nd base; Prof. Yount, 1st base; Prof. Dau, short stop; Rev. Bakke (Concord), right field; Rev. Herzberger (Illinois), umpire.

leaders was Rev. N. J. Bakke, who requested use of the St. John's facilities for purposes of a special service for the Negro ministry, and it was conducted on the afternoon of the first Sunday in January 1895.¹⁹

The Missouri Synod considered Concordia College as a vehicle for mission work in the southeast, and by 1894, its professors were preaching to small congregations at such locations as Setzer's and Huit's School Houses. A year later, the Synod requested that the professors assume editorship of *The Lutheran Witness*. Pastor Dau notified the members that this additional work would preclude him from regular pastoral service. The resignation was not accepted by the congregation and Dau was encouraged to remain. Again on June 4, 1898, Dau entered a letter of resignation, citing that it was necessary to separate the St. John's congregation from the activities of Concordia College, as Dau's primary financial support was as President and Professor at the College. He believed that his confinement to the classroom interfered with his pastor's duties in home visitation and catechetical instruction. His editorship responsibilities also contributed to his heavy workload, and he wanted some relief.²⁰

St. John's began its quest to find a replacement. On July 3, a meeting was held with the Concordia congregation to discuss the possibilities of a joint pastorate. After a motion was defeated that Dau and Romoser serve the two congregations jointly, a unanimous Call was extended to a Rev. L. M. Wagner of St. Louis. It was also decided to hold a joint mission festival at Concordia in July, with two services conducted by Rev. George Long. At the festival, an additional joint congregational meeting was held to discuss Rev. Wagner's letter of response. It was decided to "see to getting a house for Rev. Wagner," pending approval of the financial details by the individual congregations. A week later, a motion was tabled to build Rev. Wagner a parsonage, and a committee of B. E. Smith, W. L. Yount, and H. J. Reitzel was appointed to confer with Concordia congregation.²¹

By September 4, Rev. Wagner had returned the Call, Rev. N. J. Bakke was then unanimously selected, and a second Call went forth. On October 30, the process was repeated, and Rev. L. Buchheimer was chosen. At this meeting, a joint committee of N. E. Sigman, Dolpus Herman, H. J. Reitzel, P. C. Lagel, F. J. Dellinger, Pierce Yount, M. L. Cline, Dr. Moser, B. E. Smith, and R. C. Brady was appointed to "apportion the expenses necessary in bringing a pastor here, also house rent, etc..²²

Later that year, a fourth Call was returned by Rev. Coyner [Koiner]. On January 1, 1899, a fifth unsuccessful Call was issued to Rev. George Long.²³

Pastor F. Kuegele, who was a founder and influential leader of the Missouri English Synod, recommended several possible candidates, and one of these was the young Paul S. T. Bischoff. On March 12, 1899, after five ballots considering six possible candidates, Bischoff was unanimously selected. Finally, on the sixth attempt, the congregations successfully obtained a pastor independent of Concordia College. Since "Bischoff" in German means "Bishop," his surname was certainly appropriate for his chosen occupation.²⁴

Bischoff was born the son of Professor R. A. Bischoff, of Fort Wayne, on December 5, 1876. Upon completion of parochial school in Fort Wayne, he attended Concordia College in Fort Wayne, where he graduated in 1895. He then enrolled at the seminary in St. Louis, and graduated from its theological department in 1898. Partially due to weak health and the belief that the climate of the Shenandoah Valley might help his condition, Bischoff declined acceptance of a pastoral Call upon graduation, and chose to teach High School at Bethany Church in Waynesboro, Virginia. There he met Pastor Kuegele, who became favorably impressed with the young teacher during his six month term. A young lady by the name of Edith Coiner also must have been impressed with him, as she became his wife several years later. Although accepting the Call, he was unable to come to Conover until his teaching obligations were completed for the year, and Rev. J. S. Koiner supplied for three Sundays in June and July.²⁵

During the interim, the St. John's congregation was preparing for its centennial celebration, to be held on Saturday, May 20, 1899. When the festival day arrived, the church was heavily decorated inside and outside with

19. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 48-49. Dau resigned at Concordia in 1894, was replaced by Prof. C. A. Weiss, and later Dau returned from 1896-1899 (Patten).

The Newton Enterprise, March 1894 and April 1894 had announcements for services at area School Houses.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-53.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 53-55.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 59. C. O. Smith, "Memorial. Rev. Paul Bischoff," *TLW*, Vol. XXX, No. 16, p. 123.

25. C. O. Smith Memorial. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 61.

greenery. At the 10:30 service, Pastors George Long, C. H. Bernheim, and Professor C. A. Weiss assisted. A jubilee sermon was delivered by Rev. N. J. Bakke, and Pastor Dau preached his last sermon as the regular minister at St. John's 26

But many members were in anticipation of the afternoon service, which began at 1:30. The congregation collected outside the Church, with the women on the left and the men on the right. The doors were opened and they filed in to their respective sides of the Church. After a choir anthem, Rev. J. S. Koerner read the scriptures, which were followed by a hymn. 27

The messages were then presented by two favorite sons of St. John's. C. O. Smith had attended Concordia College, under the Tennessee Synod professors, under the make-shift staff of Marshall Yount and Charles L. Coon, and under the Missouri Synod professors. Upon his graduation in 1896, he wished to enter the seminary, but finances would not permit it. Fortunately for Smith, Dr. A. L. Graebner, who was in charge of the "Indigent Students Fund" for the Missouri Synod, presented the commencement address at Concordia that year. Dr. Graebner and Pastor Dau approached Smith's father, and arrangements were made for a scholarship to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and C. O. Smith became one of the first from the area to attend this institution. He was scheduled to graduate in May of 1899, exactly the time of the Centennial. Of course, St. John's wanted one of its "sons" to be present, and Pastor Dau contacted the seminary and made arrangements for private final examinations ahead of his class. Smith arrived home in time to present a history of St. John's at the afternoon service of the Centennial Festival. This was later published in local newspapers. 28

After the hymn, "Hark! The Song of Jubilee," the large gathering heard the "Personal Reminiscences" of its oldest living Pastor -- Rev. J. M. Smith. The services concluded with the benediction, as delivered by Professor George Luecke. 29

Pastor Dau, who with the other professors had supplied the pulpit for nearly a year, accepted a Call to Hammond, Indiana, and was given a letter of gratitude for his "faithful service toward St. John's Congregation." In 1904, Dau succeeded A. L. Graebner as Professor of Theology at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and later he was elected President of Valparaiso University. 30

Candidate Bischoff arrived in Conover on July 15, 1899, and was pledged \$170.00 for a year's services. On July 30, he was ordained and installed at St. John's by Rev. G. E. Long at a 10:30 service. That afternoon, he was installed at Concordia. His introductory sermon at St. John's was delivered the following Sunday, August 6, from Romans 1:15-16: 31

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; . . .

What a comforting sermon this must have been to two congregations that had seen pastors come and go far too rapidly for nearly two uneasy decades, and who had spent nearly a year trying to attract "our pastor." As a part of his first service at St. John's, Bischoff performed his first baptism, Edna Bertielee Sigmon. 32

Bischoff's arrival prompted a shocking discovery to the two procrastinating congregations. As the method of payment of pastor's salary was modified from once per year to quarterly, it was realized that neither congregation yet owned a parsonage, and the plans were not proceeding in a timely manner! Where was the young pastor supposed to live? 33

A parsonage had never been needed by the St. John's Missouri Synod congregation or its predecessors. Arends owned two or more plantations, and the various Henkels obtained land either through grants, inheritance, or purchase. Similarly, the Mosers and Adam Miller were area land owners. J. M. Smith was now at his farm on

26. Centennial Program, on inside of front cover of *Church Minute Book I*.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Smith Autobiography*, no page numbers.

29. Centennial Program.

30. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 59.

31. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1899-1906, 1899. Original of this journal was made available by the Rev. C. O. Smith family.

32. *Ibid.*

33. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 61-62.

Lyle's Creek, and owned his own house. Even Robert A. Yoder, who was hired as the first teacher at Concordia College in 1877, arranged for his own housing. He first lived with Rev. P. C. Henkel near Conover, and later bought property in Conover and constructed a house for himself and family. When St. John's used Concordia College's faculty for ministerial guidance, the professors usually arranged for their own housing. However, Bischoff was to be the Pastor of the two Churches, and separate and apart from the College, so other accommodations were necessary.

By April of 1900, the congregation agreed to raise its share for purchase of a lot owned by Prof. Romoser, with their portion being \$60.00. Apparently, this arrangement did not work, as the churches eventually purchased a tract of land beside Concordia Church, consisting of approximately one acre, from Robert S. and Alva B. Simmons. Concordia was represented in the transfer of title by J. L. Yount and D. A. Herman, and St. John's, by W. L. Yount and D. P. Dellinger. Total cost for this acquisition was \$150.00, based on 2/5 from St. John's and 3/5 from Concordia.³⁴

In the latter part of 1900, St. John's appointed a parsonage committee of N. E. Brady, R. H. Deal, R. L. Rockett, B. E. Smith, and N. E. Sigman to confer with Concordia regarding the plans and expense of building a parsonage.³⁵

The location of the lot in Conover presented another dilemma -- transportation. As early as 1897, the pastor's transportation had become a matter of concern, as a committee of B. E. Smith, R. L. Rockett, and N. E. Brady was appointed to "make some systematic arrangement to get the pastor to church."³⁶ In addition to St. John's and Concordia, Rev. Bischoff was soon preaching to a mission congregation in Hickory, at a distance of about eight miles. A man with that much travel needed some means of transportation. What better mode of travel than a horse, and possibly a buggy? Finally some action was taken.

On July 1, 1900, "without motion the congregation considered the advisability of purchasing the pastor a horse. Concordia congregation to be consulted in the matter." At the third quarterly meeting, "The committee's report on the purchasing of a horse was received with thanks. The committee to be continued. This com. to urge Concordia Cong. to adhere to the agreement entered into on the 2/5 and 3/5 plan," the same ratio as the property purchase.³⁷

At its December meeting:

A motion was made and carried not to accept Concordia Congregation's plan. That St. John's pay 3/5 and Concordia 2/5 in purchasing a horse for the pastor.

On motion it was carried to invite Concordia Cong. to meet with St. John's in joint meeting to come to some understanding as to the 2/3 [sic] and 3/5 plan entered into by both congregations.³⁸

The parsonage committee recommended a house of eight rooms, five on the first floor, and three on the second, with an estimated cost of \$1,200. A smaller house was not considered adequate.³⁹

Seven months later, with the housing and transportation issues unresolved, Rev. Bischoff was "boarding" with John Yount near Main Street in Conover, and was getting ample commuting exercise. On February 1, 1901, "a motion was made and carried to appoint a committee of 3 to meet a similar committee of Concordia Congregation to arrange the trouble between the 2 congregations as to the horse and parsonage. That this committee be given the power to secure a horse and buggy." Appointed were F. J. Dellinger, N. E. Brady, and W. L. Yount.⁴⁰

Bischoff had begun preaching to the small group of worshippers in Hickory three months prior, and his transportation arrangements during this period are not known.⁴¹

34. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 64. Catawba County Register of Deeds, Book 60, Page 483, Catawba County Courthouse, Newton, NC.

35. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 66.

36. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 45-46.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 66.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

40. *J. M. Smith Diary*, 1901, lists Bischoff's address for supply purposes at St. Peter's. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 68.

41. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1900.

On March 17, 1901, Secretary J. Hunsucker and Chairman F. J. Dellinger presented the following report:

The committee on parsonage, horse and buggy made a report which was taken up and discussed by item. The report as amended by St. John's congregation reads thus: "Your committee on parsonage and horse and buggy met a like committee from Concordia congregation in the joint meeting and beg leave to report the following recommendations:

First: That St. John's congregation supply the horse and buggy and provide all expenses incidental thereto.

Secondly, That St. John's donate their present interest in joint lot purchased for parsonage in Conover to Concordia Church, and that Concordia congregation take deed for parsonage lot and in lieu thereof build a suitable stable and shed for horse and buggy furnished for joint pastor, . . . and to build a suitable parsonage thereon.⁴²

And at the June quarterly meeting the negotiations continued, when the committee reported:

Be it resolved: That St. John's congregation adopt the resolution and enterpritation [sic] of Concordia congregation in relation to ownership of horse, buggy, and lot and parsonage of joint pastorate provided Concordia congregation thereby agrees to give St. John's congregation at least a 10 years lease on said stable, or so long thereafter as the joint pastorate may continue.⁴³

A month later, St. John's held a called meeting, where it was reported of "Concordia's rejection of same." If Concordia was going to build the stable, they wanted to own it outright. Yet the St. John's committee members knew that it would cost about \$100 per year for horse feed, and at the end of ten years, the costs would nearly balance out between the cost of the parsonage and upkeep of the horse. Nevertheless, St. John's acquiesced and accepted the former resolution discussed in March, a committee was appointed to clean off the grave yard, and it was decided to hold the annual picnic at Sparkling Catawba Springs.⁴⁴

Twenty-one months after Pastor Bischoff's arrival in Conover, the St. John's Horse and Buggy Committee delivered the merchandise on April 6, 1901 -- which must have been a day of jubilation for all involved -- especially the Pastor, his worn-out shoe soles, and the negotiators from the two congregations.⁴⁵

On April 5, 1902, "the horse and buggy committee reported that there was a balance of \$22.00 . . . unpaid. Of this amount \$11.50 has been subscribed. The report was received and committee continued."⁴⁶

By July 19, 1902, "the committee reported that \$3.50 was unpaid but that more than that amount was subscribed. The committee was excused with thanks." Two years and two weeks after its initial discussion on the matter, the horse and buggy committee had finally paid for Rev. Paul Bischoff's means of transportation.⁴⁷

With the horse and buggy days behind us, work could begin in earnest on the parsonage. This endeavor proceeded with equal haste, and was eventually completed by Concordia's congregation in 1903, with final payment being made on August 8 of that year. Total cost was exactly \$1,087.63.⁴⁸

Faithful to the agreement with St. John's, the horse was suitably accommodated in a new stable, at a total cost of \$63.22, with \$20.00 being for labor.⁴⁹ This approximates the original land cost to St. John's of \$60.00, with slight inflation.

Nearly a year later, there appeared a report in the *Newton Enterprise*. "The Lutherans have taken a notion to complete their parsonage. A preacher needs a shelter whether he has a family or not."⁵⁰

The earliest known photograph of the parsonage, circa 1910, shows the front of the original, ornately-detailed, two-story house, of the Queen Anne style. The front portion of this house was constructed similar to the style of several other prominent houses of the period, whereby all rooms had exposure on at least two walls. This

42. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 69.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

44. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 71. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, cites one occasion when St. John's paid him \$100.00 for a year's supply of horse feed.

45. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1901.

46. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 74.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

48. *Concordia Church, Parsonage Committee Accounting Journal*. Thanks to Concordia Congregation for access to this journal.

49. *Ibid.*

50. Patten, no page numbers.

floor plan conformed to normal usage of framing lumber, and allowed for interior cross-ventilation of each room, as windows or exterior doors were usually on two walls of all rooms, and often on three walls.⁵¹

The two-story part of the original construction had approximately ten foot ceilings on the interior. The roof of the main portion of the house was predominantly hipped, with gables protruding on the front, right and left. The steeply-sloped roof was clad with wood shingles. The main floor plan consisted of a central stairway hall/Parlor with the stairway on the right side of this hall. Two rooms were located to the right and one to the left. Each room had a fireplace or provisions for a wood stove.

On the upper floor of the front portion, there were two bedrooms on the right side of the central hall and one on the left, aligning over the rooms below, with a sitting area at the front of the stair hall over the foyer/front door area.

As viewed from the exterior, the prominent features were a bay window on the lower floor of right projecting gable, and a "wrap-around" porch which began at the front entrance. The porch offset twice, until its termination on the left side of the residence. Modified Queen Anne style wood detailing was originally installed in the roof gables and on the porch columns and brackets. There were three internal chimneys with corbeled brick caps.

The earliest photograph indicates that there may have been a "widow's watch" on the upper floor stair hall. This architectural term was applied to the situation of wife anxiously awaiting the return of a sailor at sea. Perhaps the wife was awaiting her husband to return from Concordia College campus, or more likely, the "watch" was placed there due to the popular architectural style of the era.

The front portion of the parsonage had operational hinged window shutters, which could open outwardly, with louvers that would operate vertically to nearly completely shut out the light or outside air. These shutters protected double hung windows which had the panes divided vertically at midpoint. The front door was detailed from the "Eastlake" style, with glass transom and glazed/paneled sidelights, derived from British architectural trends of the late nineteenth century.

The original rear wing created two rooms to the left of the lower floor, a Kitchen and Dining Area. The central stair hall aligned with the rear porch which faced south.

No description or photograph could be located for the stable, the horse, or the buggy.

Information on the early period of Bischoff's service to St. John's is preserved by his personal journal. From this, many of the Church customs and routines of the period can be established. His first funeral for a St. John's member occurred on August 16, 1899, just over two weeks after his ordination. Rev. J. M. Smith preached the regular funeral service for Mrs. Elizabeth Ann Sigman, who died at the age of 86. Bischoff conducted the services at the Sigmon home and at the graveside. Marriages were held either in the Church, in a private home, or in the parsonage (after it was finally completed). Holy Communion was usually celebrated twice per year, with a preparatory service being delivered the day before. During the distribution, the congregation engaged in continuous singing. Weekly passion services were held during the Lenten season, and of course, services were conducted on the major church festivals. Church officers served terms based on the calendar year, and were usually installed on the first service in January. By 1901, at the same meeting where they voted to buy the horse and buggy, St. John's elected to utilize the Missouri Synod Hymnal 52.

Consistent with the conservative Lutheran tradition of Catawba County and as a result of the local Lutheran disputes of the 1890's, congregational practices were very strict, and inter-denominational relationships received extensive scrutiny. On one occasion, Pastor Bischoff was reluctant to baptize the five-year-old child of a non-member unless the mother, who stood as sponsor, promised to "connect herself with church & get catechising." Should regular members in good standing be sponsors, baptisms were performed without such admonition. Excommunication was the acceptable remedy for improper conduct of members -- such as for failure to attend congregational meetings. New members were placed under careful scrutiny, and often were requested to undergo an oral examination by the Church Council prior to acceptance. On one occasion, a member was accepted by letter of transfer from Old St. Paul's, only because she was originally confirmed by J. M. Smith, who was a Missouri

51. Description of the parsonage was derived from study of several extant photographs in the possession of the Concordia Historical Archives Committee. The following persons contributed to the description through private conversations with Mark Smith: Rev. George Mennen, Jr., Mrs. Margaret Hefner, Mr. Elmer McRee, Mr. Martin McRee, Mr. Rudy McRee, and Mr. Morris Powers -- all who either lived in the house or whose families live nearby. A scale model can be seen at Concordia Historical Archives Room.

52. *Paul Bischoff Journal, 1899-1901. Church Minute Book I*, p. 69.

Synod pastor at time of transfer, but had been connected with the Tennessee Synod when the applicant was confirmed.⁵³

When the churches sent delegates to the Synod Meetings, the congregation covered their expenses. St. John's and Concordia shared these expenses, which totaled \$26.50 for the year 1901. Local fiscal responsibilities were of concern, as the congregation purchased insurance for its portion of the building for \$5.00 from Farmer's Mutual.⁵⁴

The youth of the church seemed important to Pastor Bischoff. Children's Reformation services were a regular part of the church year, with the collection earmarked for missions. On Christmas Eve, the children were treated to a Christmas tree service, which took considerable planning with three congregations still occupying the Church. By August 22, 1899, the young Pastor Bischoff commenced confirmation instruction to his first St. John's class of about twenty-five pupils, who met every Tuesday and Saturday mornings. On May 6, 1900, a class of 26 was confirmed into the Church, and they partook their first Lord's Supper two weeks later. In October, two more were confirmed, and 125 communed. Sunday School picnics were often held at "Springs," which was the popular Catawba Springs Resort in northern Catawba County.⁵⁵

When Bischoff took his vacation in August of 1900, the congregation was supplied by Professor Koiner and Rev. C. O. Smith. The wedding of Herbert Arndt and Dora Smith was performed by Prof. Romoser, and a funeral for Anna Ethel Yount by Prof. Luecke. The congregation was still very dependent on the College or J. M. Smith for supply services, although they now had a full-time pastor separate from the College. Also, college student Paul C. Henry preached at St. John's during this summer.⁵⁶

In 1900, a joint Reformation and Mission Festival was held at Bethel Church on November 4. The service was scheduled to be held outdoors, but rain prevented it, and attendance was not very good. Pastor Bischoff preached the morning service, and Rev. J. M. Smith and Professor Luecke delivered addresses at the afternoon mission services -- outdoors. Collections from these services went to missions and the synodical treasury.⁵⁷

The Augustana Conference meeting of the year 1900 was held at Concordia College, and Pastor Bischoff's report of these proceedings provides insight into these sessions:

Pursuant to a notice issued in the "Witness," Augustana Conference of North Carolina met at Conover, December 2-30, [sic: Dec. 27-30] 1900. Private sessions were held on Thursday and on Friday in the library of the college. Papers on Rom. 2:12-16, by Prof. J. S. Koiner, and Christ's Descent into Hell, by Rev. J. M. Smith, were discussed in these sessions.--On Thursday afternoon conference adjourned for half an hour in order to attend services at the Lutheran Church, where the marriage of two of our young English brethren took place, Rev. C. O. Smith, of Scranton, Miss., and Rev. Paul C. Henry, of Waynesboro, Va. The brides, Clara and Effie Huit, were Sunday-school teachers of Concordia congregation. May God bless our young brethren and make them faithful laborers in the vineyard.--On Saturday three public sessions were held. At 7 o'clock in the evening, the pastoral sermon was preached by Rev. J. C. Schmidt, of Greensboro. Holy Communion was celebrated Sunday morning, Rev. Long preaching the Gospel sermon. A collection of nine dollars was taken for the Synodical Treasury. In the afternoon Professor Weiss preached the Mission sermon. Collection \$6.00. Conference will meet annually and will ask each of the eight congregations in the neighborhood served by Missouri pastors to send one lay-delegate to attend the sessions of conference.⁵⁸

When has Conover seen the double wedding of sisters and Sunday School teachers to two Lutheran Pastors?

Catechism instruction for 1901's class began on January 12 with 22 pupils. Classes were held on Tuesday and Saturday mornings at 9:00 A. M..⁵⁹

On January 21, 1901, Bischoff officiated the funeral service of former Pastor C. H. Bernheim, at Concordia. The German-born son of a Lutheran Pastor, Bernheim died the day before at age of 69, and was buried at Concordia Cemetery. Pastor Bernheim, who had resigned at St. John's in 1893, soon moved in with his daughter

53. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1901-1902.

54. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1901, 1903.

55. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1899-1900.

56. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1900.

57. George Leucke, "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XIX, No. 12, 21 Nov 1900, 93.

58. "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XXI, No. 16, 21 Jan. 1901, p. 127.

59. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1901.

in Lexington. He returned to Conover in 1899 and constructed a house, where he only lived a few short months before his death.⁶⁰

The 1901 graduation class of Concordia College proved to be important, as George Mennen, Oswald Kreinheder, and J. Franklin Yount matriculated. All three of these young men attended the Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Mennen and Kreinheder returned to Catawba County and were later pastors at St. John's. J. Franklin Yount was a grandson of St. John's, and a local favorite who'd also have his opportunity to occasionally supply the pulpit, beginning on the first Sunday of August 1902.⁶¹

The joint Reformation and Mission Festival of 1901 was held at St. John's Church, and Concordia College Professors Weiss and Koerner preached in the morning services. Pastors G. E. Long and Bischoff addressed the afternoon assembly. Collections were again designated to Mission Funds. In the following week, the Augustana Conference and the pastors of the Negro missions in North Carolina held a meeting at St. Peter's, where a good crowd was in attendance, including members of six area churches.⁶²

By 1902, Bischoff began preaching in Newton, and inaugurated a catechism class of 8 students held at 6:30 on Sunday nights. Two weeks later the School-house was full to hear his sermon. What became of this congregation is not known, as the class was never confirmed by Bischoff, and his congregational efforts in Newton ceased.⁶³

The 1903 meeting of the Augustana Conference was held at Old St. Paul's, and Pastor Bischoff's report of this meeting, although not very pertinent to the history of St. John's, is too curious to omit:

As you travel from Conover over the road going southwest for about two miles you will suddenly come in sight of a peculiar old building standing on the right side of the road, just opposite a large grave-yard. Were it not for this cemetery, a stranger passing by would undoubtedly think that the weather-beaten building to the right were a mill which years ago had ceased to run, rather than a church, for it looks more like a mill than a church. Yet this four-cornered two-story building is said to be the oldest church-building in the county, as it is surely, one of the oddest. For many years it has been known as St. Paul's church. There is another thing peculiar about this church. On every Sunday in a month a different congregation worships there. On the first Sunday in every month the small St. Paul's congregation which was received into our Synod at its last session at Pittsburg, worships there with its pastor, Prof. Romoser. On the other Sundays there is "Ohio" preaching, "Tennessee" preaching, and "Reformed" preaching. But August had an extra Sunday, and it was on this fifth Sunday that the people from far and near came to St. Paul's. They came to attend Conference; for Augustana Conference was meeting with the people of St. Paul's. This Conference gets its name not from the hottest month of the year, in which it generally manages to hold its meetings, but from the Augustana, or Augsburg Confession. In addition to the four professors and four ministers from Conover, there were present five of the missionaries that work among the colored people in North Carolina, and also Rev. J. B. Rodgers from Knox Co., Tenn. Prof. Hennemer and Rev. Rodgers were received at this session, so that there were present fourteen ministers. Also Rev. A. L. Crouse of the Tennessee Synod, and Rev. Hunt, of the Ohio Synod attended a few sessions. The seven congregations in the county that belong to our Synod had each sent a lay-delegate. In addition to these many others attended. On Friday morning and afternoon the Rev. J. Ph. Schmidt, of Concord, led in the discussion on the Ninth and Tenth Commandments, and also on Saturday morning, the discussion was both interesting and instructive to the people. On Saturday at eleven o'clock services were held in which Prof. Luecke preached the pastoral sermon. On Saturday afternoon Pastor Bischoff, catechized a number of children on Redemption; Pastor J. C. Schmidt spoke on the duty of children to their parents; Pastor Geo. Schutes on the duty of subjects to their government; Prof. C. A. Weiss on the duty of hearers to their pastor; Pastor P. Engelbert on the duty of servants to their masters; Pastor J. B. Rodgers on the duty of the young in general to the old. The congregation was very attentive throughout. Sunday morning at ten o'clock communion services were held in the church, Prof. Romoser delivering the Confessional address. The regular services were held out in the grove. In the morning service Rev. Rodgers preached the Gospel sermon. The afternoon service was opened with an anthem sung by the choir of Concordia Church. After the congregation had sung, "From Greenland's icy mountains," Pastor P. Engelbert preached the mission sermon. The collections taken up amounted to thirty-seven dollars. Short addresses were then made by the Pastors J. C. Schmidt, Geo. Schutes, and N. J. Bakke. Pastor Bakke spoke on Mission work among the colored people, after which a collection for this mission was lifted. Not only on Sunday, but also on Friday and Saturday dinner was kindly served by the ladies of St. Paul's congregation in the grove near the church. In its private sessions held on Monday in the College chapel Conference listened to an exegetical treatise by the undersigned on Acts 19:1-7, and also

60. George A. Romoser, "In Memoriam," *TLW*, Vol. XIX, No. 18, 21 Feb 1901, p. 139.

61. George A. Romoser, "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XX, No. 2, 21 Jun 1901, p. 13. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 75.

62. Paul Bischoff, "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XX, No. 12, 21 Nov. 1901, pp. 92-93. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1901.

63. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1901.

discussed a paper on insurance prepared by Prof. Luecke. At five o'clock Conference adjourned, to meet next year with St. John's congregation, three miles northeast of Conover.⁶⁴

Church work continued in 1903 with the painting of the roof and exterior of the building. When the bills came in, the costs were \$22.60, of which the Missouri Synod congregation paid 3/4ths. Communion services were increased to three times per year, the Augustana Conference was again invited to St. John's in 1904, and the Reformation Festival tradition was continued at Mt. Olive, east of Conover.⁶⁵

In 1904, Passion Services were conducted at 10:00 A. M. on Fridays during the Lenten season, and a fundraiser was held for ministerial student Franklin Yount. By July, the congregation was busy in preparation for the Augustana Conference, as lumber was necessary to construct a table outdoors, and other work needed to be done around the Church.⁶⁶

At the end of the year 1905, Pastor Bischoff's salary had been a constant \$170.00 per year for seven years. In several years, the payments ran behind, but the audit report of 1906 indicated that the congregation had caught up. At this time, Bischoff received a Call from a congregation in Freedom, Pennsylvania. St. John's encouraged him to return the Call, and Bischoff complied with their resolution. A subscription was taken for the year 1907, and the congregation showed their appreciation for the young pastor, as they offered him \$292.50 for the next year.⁶⁷

In 1906, it became necessary to replace the organ and a stove in the Church, and the "union" church dilemma came forth. In October, a committee of Pastor Bischoff and N. E. Sigman was appointed to discuss the organ issue with the other congregations. The stove purchase was resolved quickly as it was cold outside, with the Missouri congregation paying one-half, and the other two congregations, one-fourth each. By March of 1907, had been accomplished regarding the organ. Finally, in March of 1908, the organ committee had a favorable report.

We, your committee report, that we have purchased a Cornish Chapel Organ for the Church. It is an organ with an action of 284 reeds and 14 stops. It is guaranteed for 25 years, and anything that breaks or gets out of order during that time will be replaced free by the company. It is the best action that we thought we could get for the money we had at our disposal.⁶⁸

Such was the typical speed at which major items were accomplished at St. John's union church. Received at that time was \$78.20, of which the Reformed Congregation contributed \$10.00. Total cost of the instrument was \$75.19, including freight. An agreement was drawn up between the Missouri and Reformed congregations regarding use of the organ. The Ohio Synod congregation did not participate, but eventually requested to purchase one fourth interest in the year 1911, whereupon a committee was appointed to confer with them. In 1915, an offer was repeated in the amount of \$3.00 plus one-fourth cost of yearly maintenance.⁶⁹

When the Missouri congregation wanted to install carpet in the Church, the other two congregations "would not help," so they pursued the project themselves. They also agreed to have an altar built without assistance from the others. Total cost for 30 yards of carpet, pad, and altar was \$51.08.70

In January 1909, it was decided to build a "wood house," and R. L. Rockett, Lawrence Yount, and J. K. Smith were appointed to obtain the materials, with the labor to come forth from the congregation. Exactly when this work was completed is not known, but it was sometime after March.⁷¹

St. John's congregation hosted the annual Reformation Mission Festival on the fifth Sunday of October, 1910, with invitations extended to all area Missouri Synod congregations.⁷²

64. Paul Bischoff, "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XXII, No. 19, 10 Sep 1903, p. 150.

65. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 76-79, 89.

66. *Ibid.*, pp. 81, 83-84.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 91, 114.

68. *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99, 105.

69. *Ibid.*, pp. 105-106, 134, 161.

70. *Ibid.*, pp. 108, 111.

71. *Ibid.*, pp. 112, 114.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

For several years, life at St. John's had been fairly stable under Pastor Bischoff, but a merger movement was afoot in the Missouri Synod. The German Missouri Synod was finally recognizing importance of the transition to the English language. Formerly, she had left work in the English-speaking districts to the Ohio Synod, until the pre-destination issue caused the two Synods to dramatically polarize in the early 1880's. When Catawba County's P. C. Henkel and J. R. Moser helped found the English Conference in Gravelton, Missouri, in 1872, the few congregations did not become an integral part of the German Missouri Synod. However, other English work under the influences of the Missouri Synod was being accomplished in Pennsylvania and Maryland by 1874. No other English effort was actively pursued by the German Missouri Synod prior to 1880. After Missouri and Ohio Synods went their separate ways, many pastors were confronted with doctrinal issues that had heretofore never been broached. Pastors and congregations from both Missouri and Ohio were changing Synodical allegiance. This was easily accomplished by German-speaking Pastors who moved from Ohio to Missouri, and was equally fine for either English-speaking or German-speaking Pastors moving from Missouri to Ohio. Those who found themselves without a Synodical home were the former Ohio pastors who spoke English and who agreed with Missouri's doctrinal positions. In the language of one of their pastors, "we do not see what advantage it would be for us to belong to a synod whose language we do not understand." In 1884, the Missouri Synod rejected the appeals of these pastors to bend towards English, and the Concordia Synod was formed from a group in the northern Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland area. After five years, the Synod disbanded, and all except for Pastor F. Kuegele, were absorbed into various districts of the Missouri Synod. Pastor Kuegele appealed on behalf of his congregation to ally with the small English Missouri Conference, and two appeals went to the German Synod for their recognition of, and support for, an English District within their jurisdiction. These petitions were refused in 1887, "as there seemed to be no prospect of founding English congregations within its bounds in the near future," and the petitioners were advised to form their own Synod. In 1888, the English Missouri Synod was formed, based on distinctions in language, not doctrine.⁷³

When this small synod gained control of Concordia College, its fortunes improved dramatically in the missionary area of North Carolina. Whereas in the year 1890, there was not a single local Pastor, Professor, or congregation in connection with the Missouri English Synod, by 1910, there were nine pastors or professors and ten congregations in Catawba County alone, and a total of thirteen pastors or professors and sixteen congregations scattered across the Piedmont, plus Asheville.⁷⁴

But in 1899, the German Synod recognized that the English language was here to stay, and began exerting its influence among those Lutherans -- in competition with the smaller English Synod. The time was right for discussion of merger or amalgamation, and the general opinion among some of the founding pastors of the English Synod was, "The time has come when we should all belong together and work together in one body." Further appeals went forth from *The Lutheran Witness* editors at Concordia College, and eventually, the English Synod was incorporated into the German Missouri Synod as a distinct district, labeled the English District. By 1911, the congregational votes had been completed, with 30 churches in favor of a union by district, three and one half in favor of union by amalgamation, and eleven and one half opposed. The churches had made their statement, and the English Missouri Synod became the nucleus of the English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Missouri Synod on May 15, 1911.⁷⁵

The local Augustana Conference was disbanded, and a Southeastern Conference of the English District was soon organized as its replacement. Its first meeting was held in August 1910 at Koiner's congregation in Augusta County, Virginia, where C. O. Smith and G. E. Mennen delivered addresses.⁷⁶

During the course of this re-alignment, Pastor Bischoff's health worsened. Professors Romoser, Luecke, and Haentzschel substituted for a period of time in early 1911, and the St. John's congregation assisted Pastor Bischoff

73. F. Kuegele, "On Synodical Union," *TLW*, Vol. XIX, No. 11, 26 May 1910, pp. 83-84.

74. "Parochial Report, Jan. 1, 1910, Missouri Synod," *TLW*, Vol. XXX, No. 7, 30 Mar 1911, p. 52-3.

75. F. Kuegele, "On Synodical Union," *TLW*, Vol. XXIX, No. 11, 26 May 1910, pp. 83-84. H. P. Eckhart and George A.

Romoser, "Synodical Union," Vol. XXX, No. 3, 2 Feb 1911, p. 19. It cannot be determined from the Church Minutes whether or not St. John's ever voted for this merger.

76. "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XXIX, No. 19, 15 Sep 1910, p. 149.

with his medical expenses. St. John's engaged one of the Professors as its delegate at the meeting of its "new" Synod.⁷⁷ Reverend C. O. Smith touchingly described Bischoff's last days:

During the last few years of his life especially, his friends noticed with sorrow that his strength seemed to be going from him. During the last Christmas holidays he broke down completely. The congregations voted him a six-months' vacation, and the professors of Concordia College kindly took charge of his work during his absence. In June he came back determined to try to work on. He preached one sermon at Concordia, his text being "God is love." His people pitied him when they saw how he labored to tell them of the God who loves us. He preached once more—a funeral at St. John's.⁷⁸

By about midnight on July 3, 1911, the thirty-four year old, Pastor Paul Bischoff had hitched up the horse and buggy for the last time, and had spent his last night in the parsonage -- but he labored no more. Three days later, Prof. G. A. Romoser preached the funeral service to an overflowing crowd at Concordia Church, and Prof. H. B. Hemmeter followed with fitting remarks. Bischoff's remains were carried to their final resting place at Concordia Cemetery by six Lutheran pastors, and Professor Hemmeter delivered the parting address.⁷⁹

The pastors salary was paid through the end of July, and for the remainder of the year, two-thirds of the balance was given to the young widow Bischoff and one-third to the supply pastors from the College. Furthermore, N. E. Sigman was appointed to confer with Concordia congregation to ascertain Pastor Bischoff's medical expenses during his illness, and later, the congregations furnished a suitable monument for Bischoff's grave.⁸⁰

During the twelve year period of Paul Bischoff's service, the Missouri Synod congregation at St. John's was fairly stable, with noticeable healthy growth in communicant membership. Parochial reports reveal the following statistics:

	1900	1910
Voting Members:	81	82
Souls:	66	60
Communicants:	301	325
Communed in year:	151	201
Baptisms:	254	543
Confirmed:	10	9
Marriages:	28	0
Burials:	3	2
	0	2

In total, Pastor Paul Bischoff baptized 100 and confirmed 92 at St. John's. His term at St. John's represented the longest of any pastor since 1883. He entered a congregation that had somewhat stabilized from two decades of turmoil, and became the catalyst for a new period of congregational life.⁸³

The parsonage and stable remained the property of Concordia, but the exact disposition of the horse and buggy is not known.

The text for Pastor Bischoff's funeral address seems to be perfectly fitting to the congregation at St. John's at that time:

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Hebrews 4:9.

77. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 129, 132.

78. C. O. Smith, "Memorial. Rev. Paul Bischoff," *TLW*, Vol. XXX, No. 16, 3 Aug 1911, p. 123.

79. *Ibid.*

80. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 135, 147.

81. *Paul Bischoff Journal*, 1900.

82. *Ibid.*, 1910.

83. C. O. Smith, Memorial, cited above.

THE OHIO SYNOD LUTHERANS

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord. The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion. Psalm 134.

The history of the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized congregation at St. John's was previously suspended, as it was being served by Pastor George Luther Hunt, with occasional visits from younger men of this Synod.

The possible final attempt at reunion with the Tennessee Synod was aborted in 1883. The small Synod was attempting to connect to a larger synodical body when it made advances toward the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States. On November 24, 1883, they applied for connection with its Concordia English District, and at the Joint Synod meeting of 1884, the Tennessee Synod Re-Organized was accepted. St. John's Pastor G. L. Hunt, Pastor M. L. Carpenter, and Pastor D. C. Huffman were admitted as members, along with their eight congregations, including St. John's, Miller's, and Old St. Paul's of Catawba County.¹

Ample references to the Ohio Synod and its Concordia District have been made during the discussions of Lutheran Higher Education in previous chapters, as this merger prompted an immediate movement towards establishment of a school. During this period, the Ohio congregation at St. John's began to be served by G. L. Hunt's son, Luther Melancthon Hunt. L. M. Hunt completed his education at Capitol University in 1886, where he received an A. B. degree.² Upon graduation, Hunt received calls from the South Fork charge, West Virginia, and the joint pastorate of St. John's, Old St. Paul's, and Miller's. He accepted the latter, and followed the work of his father in Catawba County. He became a professor at the Practical English Seminary in Hickory the following year.³

In 1887, a congregation was formed at a place known as "Charlotte Crossing," simply "Crossing," "Setzer's Depot," or "Setzer's Town." The latter two names are attributed to its only store building, owned by John W. Setzer. Other than St. John's and Bethel, the nearest church was Bethlehem Methodist, on the dirt road between "Crossing" and Catawba Station.⁴

The group at "Crossing" met under an oak grove, and after a few years, St. Mark's Lutheran Church and the Town of Claremont became realities.⁵ Their church building was begun in 1888, but was not completed until 1892.⁶ This congregation was important to the history of the St. John's Ohio Lutheran congregation for many reasons. St. Mark's was formed from a nucleus of membership from St. John's, based on a list of the St. Mark's early surnames, which include Deal, Frazier, Hollar, Huffman, Mingus, Pope, Shook, Sipe, Sigmon, Travis, Yount, and more. All of these family names are found upon the tombstones at St. John's, and have heretofore appeared in this history. Among the early officers of St. Mark's were H. L. Sigmon, J. T. Sigmon, Robert P. Hollar, John D. Kelly, and Calvin A. Sigmon.⁷

More importantly, the St. Mark's congregation cooperated in a joint pastorate with St. John's for all but a few years, from its formation until 1945. The arrangement among the congregations of the Union church at St.

1. Golladay, pp. 20-21.

2. *Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, 1885-1886*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1886), pages not numbered.

3. Barger, p. 19.

4. Stanley J. Stiver, "The Story of St. Mark's", unpublished manuscript used for Church play for centennial celebration, (1987), p. 1. Another source cites this date as 1886. *J. M. Smith Diary* lists preaching at this location in April 1887. The first pastor is subject to debate.

5. Stiver, pp. 1-3.

6. Golladay, p. 22.

7. Church Book - St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, pages are not numbered. Special thanks to the St. Mark's congregation for sharing this information.

John's allowed its Ohio congregation to hold services on the second Sunday morning and fourth Sunday night of each month, although the schedule changed occasionally.⁸

St. Mark's soon owned a parsonage to house the shared pastor, and aligned itself with the Ohio Synod. Of utmost significance to this history, St. Mark's has carefully maintained pastorate information and the records from JOINT congregational meetings, which are equally relevant to the congregation at St. John's, and often to other congregations -- Old St. Paul's and Mt. Zion, near Conover. Due to lack of known records of the Ohio Synod congregation at St. John's, it is from the hand-written records of this neighboring congregation that much of the following history was re-constructed.

The younger Hunt remained on the faculty of the Practical English Seminary and continued to serve his congregations until he accepted a Call to Thornville, Ohio in spring of 1891, and was dismissed to the English District of the Ohio Synod.⁹ Pastor W. E. Tressel replaced Hunt as professor, but resigned in 1892 to accept a Call to Baltimore.¹⁰ Whether Tressel supplied or was full-time pastor at St. John's during this period is not known, but it is very likely that either he or Rev. Prof. Doermann provided at least a limited ministry to the congregation.

The records of St. Mark's begin in year 1892, with the arrival of J. H. Rexrode.

Candidate J. H. Rexrode, of St. Paul's Ev. Luth. Seminary, Hickory, N. C., having received and accepted a call to the Pastorate of St. Mark's and St. John's Ev. Luth. Congregations of Catawba Co., N. C., was ordained and installed in St. Mark's Church on May 22, 1892 by Profs. H. K. G. Doermann and W. E. Tressel.¹¹

This was likely a very festive weekend in "Crossing," North Carolina, as on the day before, St. Mark's Church building was dedicated by the same two Professors.¹²

At the May, 1893 Concordia District meeting at Miller's Church, Rexrode's St. Mark's congregation was accepted into the Joint Synod of Ohio, and he accompanied St. John's layman, G. A. Brady, on the Board of Directors of the Practical English Seminary by the school year 1893-1894.¹³

At nearly the peak of the synodical controversies in 1894, Pastor Rexrode received a call to Mt. Olive, Mission Hill, and Good Hope congregations in West Virginia. After due consideration, he intended to accept this call. He was unanimously petitioned by his members to return the Call -- which he did. However, a year later, another Call for Rexrode's services appeared from Hardy and Pendleton Counties, West Virginia, from the same three congregations. A joint congregational meeting was held at St. John's on March 10, 1895, and the vote was again unanimous that Rexrode re-consider. Ten days later, he decided to accept the call, and was installed in West Virginia by Rev. W. N. Harley in Mt. Olive Church on May 12, 1895.¹⁴

From March until August, St. John's and St. Mark's remained without a pastor, and relied on occasional supply services from a Professor at the seminary in Hickory, H. K. G. Doermann.¹⁵

On March 31, a joint congregational meeting was held at St. Mark's with St. John's and the new congregation of Mt. Zion, in consideration of selecting a new pastor. Rev. J. M. Senter, a native of Gaston County,

8. Stiver, p. 10.

9. *Minutes of the Fifteenth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Patmos Church, Shenandoah County, Virginia, from April 29 to May 5, 1891*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1891), p. 7.

10. Barger, p. 21.

11. Church Book - St. Mark's. A similarly worded report was included in *Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Washington, D. C., from June 8th to June 15th, 1892*, (Columbus, OH, Lutheran Book Concern: 1892), p. 7, copy from J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.

12. *Concordia District Minutes - 1892*, cited above.

13. *Seventeenth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Miller's Church, Hickory, N. C., from May 25th to May 31st, 1893*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1893), p. 26. *1893-1894 Catalogue of the Educational Institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and other States*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1889). Subtitle: *St. Paul's Practical Theological Seminary, Hickory, N. C.*, no page numbers.

14. Church Book - St. Mark's.

15. *Ibid.*

a graduate of the Hickory college, and now residing in West Virginia, was "unanimously elected pastor of said congregations." He returned the call.¹⁶

A second joint meeting of the three congregations was held at St. John's on June 9, 1895, and former Pastor M. L. Hunt, who was then in Thornville, Ohio, was tendered a call. He also returned it.¹⁷

Finally, a two day joint meeting was conducted on July 6 and 7 at St. Mark's and Mt. Zion, respectively, and a unanimous call went forth to the former pastor -- Rexrode. Rev. Rexrode accepted and was re-installed by Professor Doermann to the three-church pastorate on August 11, 1895, at a service held at St. John's. His acceptance was just in time to be "pastor loci" and elected Treasurer at the blockbuster Concordia District Meeting, scheduled for St. John's, but held at the new church building at St. Mark's, in September. The joint congregations were represented at this meeting by delegate J. W. Sigman, a St. Mark's member. At this meeting, Mt. Zion petitioned for admission to the Synod and was "cordially received."¹⁸

The 1895 parochial report of Rexrode's congregations listed 190 communicant members; 144 communed; 288 communions; 68 voting members; 25 infant baptisms; 8 transfers; 2 marriages; 5 funerals; and \$450.00 total budgets.¹⁹ Approximately one hundred of the communicant members were from the rapidly growing St. Mark's, indicating that the other two congregations were comparatively small.²⁰

Prior to the 1896 meeting of the Concordia District, the parishes of Catawba County were realigned. St. John's and Mt. Zion withdrew, and united with Old St. Paul's to form the "Conover charge." Pastor Rexrode continued at St. Mark's, and also served a new congregation. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, there was a small congregation on Island Ford Road between the Lyle's Creek covered bridge and the ford. By the 1880's, they had constructed a small church building, and Thyatira Church from "Catfish, N. C.," was received into the Concordia District in 1896. Rexrode was also teaching in a parochial school in Claremont. "Father" Hunt had resigned from Old St. Paul's by that time, and a call went forth to Rev. L. P. Propes, of West Virginia. Propes accepted, and was installed into the new "Conover charge" in late 1896.²¹

St. John's, Mt. Zion, and Old St. Paul's immediately went to work to jointly construct a parsonage for Pastor Propes, and it was completed by spring of 1897.²²

In 1901, Propes' churches were visited by an appointee from the Concordia District, and his report was as follows:

On the 28th of April, 1901, I visited St. Paul's congregation in Rev. Propes' charge. In this congregation I did not find everything in the best condition; yet it was in fairly good condition, excepting financial obligations. Other troubles, I think, were not of any great consequence. . . . I also visited, on the 12th of May 1901, the other congregations of Rev. Propes' charge, St. John's and Mt. Zion, and found them in excellent condition.²³

This report may be laced with synodical enthusiasm, as the overall condition of the joint congregations at St. John's was not very stable. Mt. Zion and Old St. Paul's were similarly dismal in their prospects.²⁴

Propes submitted a parochial report to the District, which combines the statistics of his three churches. The total membership in 1901 was 288 baptized members, of which 51 were voters and 116 were communicant

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. *Ibid.* *Concordia English District Minutes - 1895*, pp. 3, 4, 39.

19. *Ibid.* parochial report is attached to back cover of minutes.

20. Church Book - St. Mark's, taken from membership list.

21. *Minutes of the Twentieth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Potmos Church, Calvary, Shenandoah Co., Va., from October 14 to 19, 1896*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1896), pp. 9, 64.

22. *Minutes of the Twenty-First Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in St. Paul's Church, Perryman, Hartford Co., Md., August 4-10, 1897*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1898), p. 10.

23. *Minutes of the Twenty-Fifth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Mt. Zion Church, Catawba Co., N. C., September 18 to 24, 1901*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1901), p. 10.

24. J. A. Yount, of the Tennessee Synod, was preaching at Mt. Zion in 1901. Every Lutheran Synod, plus the Reformers, preached at St. Paul's during this era.

members. He conducted three communion services, funerals for one adult and two children, and three marriages. He baptized ten infants and accepted three new adults into membership.²⁵

The following year represented some growth for the three congregations, as Pastor Propes received ten adult members, confirmed three adults, and baptized fifteen infants and one adult. He reported his annual salary as a modest \$148.00.²⁶

In about 1901 or 1902, Thyatira Church disbanded, and the members transferred into other Ohio Lutheran congregations -- primarily St. Mark's. Thyatira family names included Hedrick, Huffman, Shook, Sigman, Winters, and no surprises for northeastern Catawba County.²⁷

The Concordia English District held its 1903 Annual Convention at St. Mark's on September 23. The Minutes report a few surprise attendees, including R. A. Yoder, J. M. Smith, G. E. Long, P. S. T. Bischoff, J. S. Koiner, and Professors Hemmeter, Romoser, Weiss, and Luecke of Concordia College, which serve as reminders of the college affairs a few years previous. A new congregation, St. Paul's of Hickory, was accepted into membership, and former St. John's Pastor L. M. Hunt was elected President for the next year's District Meeting.²⁸

The 1907 Concordia District meeting was held in Hickory. Again, the subject of discussion was predestination, and the doctrinal position of Missouri was still labeled "Calvinism, or Calvinism does not know its own features."²⁹

By 1908, the St. John's congregation stood at 87 members, of which 49 were communicants. This represented one of the smaller Ohio Synod congregations in the county, although 11 were confirmed and 8 were baptized during the year.³⁰ Circumstances were till the same in Sept 1909.

In 1910 or 1911, Propes resigned, and there was a re-alignment of the parishes in Catawba county. St. Paul's and Miller's formed the Hickory parish, St. Mark's and Old St. Paul's constituted the Claremont parish, and St. John's and Mt. Zion, the Conover parish.

The years following Propes's departure through 1917 were surely difficult years for the St. John's Ohio congregation. No permanent pastor could be obtained and there were financial problems. From Synod Minutes are the following excerpts:

1912: Mt. Zion Congregation, near Conover, North Carolina, and St. John's Congregation, in connection with the same charge, are still without a regular pastor. Rev. J. E. Barb has been supplying the former and Rev. R. M. Carpenter, the latter. It is hoped that during this meeting of synod a redivision of the congregations into a charge may be possible.³¹

1913: In North Carolina we have at present five vacant congregations . . . Mt. Zion and St. John's near Conover . . . Revs. Barb and Carpenter have so far supplied these vacant congregations to the best of their ability, but it is not difficult to see that it is impossible to give these people even the most necessary service.³²

25. *Ibid*, parochial report is attached to end of minutes.

26. *Minutes of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Powell's Fort, Va., Sept. 17, 1902*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1903), pp. 84-87.

27. *Ibid*. R. A. Yoder Map of Catawba County - 1886.

28. *Minutes of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Claremont, N. C., in St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, September 23, 1903*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1904), pp. 4, 26.

29. *Minutes of the 30th Conventian of the Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Hickory, North Carolina, September 19-25, 1906*, (Columbus, Ohio; *The Lutheran Book Concern: 1907*), p. 17. See Chapter 10 for a thorough discussion of these doctrinal issues.

30. *Minutes of the 32nd Conventian of the Concordia English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States, held at Peru, West Virginia, September 16-21, 1908*, (Columbus, Ohio; *The Lutheran Book Concern: 1908*), pp. 58-61.

31. *Minutes of the Thirty-Sixth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Claremont, North Carolina, September 11-17, 1912*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1912), p. 14.

32. *Minutes of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Baltimore, Md., September 3-9, 1913*, (Columbus, Ohio; *Lutheran Book Concern: 1913*), p. 17.

1913: For our Conover, N. C., charge, consisting of St. John's and Mt. Zion Congregations, we recommend an appropriation of \$250. . . . Resolved that the deficits of . . . St. John's, Conover, . . . be canceled.³³

1914: The charge composed of Mt. Zion's and St. John's congregations, near Conover, N. C., has not succeeded in securing a pastor. Revs. Barb and Carpenter have rendered the most necessary services to these people.³⁴

1915: . . . has thus far not succeeding in securing a pastor. . . . vacant . . .³⁵

1916: Conover still vacant.³⁶

1917: . . . we ask that the President of Synod visit the Conover charge and arrange the calling of a pastor for this field. . . . It is most urgent that we get some pastors in North Carolina or our territory here will be lost.³⁷

During the "teens," baptized membership dropped from about 100 to about 60. As St. John's was being supplied by the pastors in Claremont, it is appropriate to describe the Claremont pastorate briefly.

When Rubertus Melanchton "Burt" Carpenter received the Call from Claremont on May 8, 1910, he immediately accepted, and was installed by Rev. Prof. J. E. Barb on June 19, 1910. Pastor Carpenter was a graduate of the academy and seminary at St. Paul's in 1897. His tenure lasted until August of 1916, when he "suddenly resigned his pastorate," to accept a charge in South Carolina. He also withdrew from the Ohio Synod, and aligned with the Tennessee Synod. During his absence, Rev. Prof. Barb served the congregations, and several unsuccessful Calls were made.³⁸

A Call went forth to Rev. J. C. Koepplin, of Detroit. In January of 1917, he had resigned from the ministry "on account of poor health." He accepted as a supply pastor only. The Claremont congregations later issued him a "regular call" on April 22, and he accepted on May 20th. After his family had arrived in Claremont, Koepplin was installed by Rev. J. E. Barb on July 15. Koepplin's health stabilized for several years, but then turned for the worse. It reached a point that he lost his voice. He recruited the services of his son, Frederick, who arrived from the seminary and provided supply services for a year. Finally, son Frederick was enlisted to read the resignation address and farewell sermon for his father in 1922.³⁹

During the brief tenure of the Koepplins, the prospects at St. John's improved slightly, as she was again placed into a joint pastorate with St. Mark's, which had become a fairly strong congregation with ability to principally support the pastor. In the 1818 re-alignment of congregations, Mt. Zion and Old St. Paul's were also placed into a joint pastorate, which proved unsuccessful. They soon sold the parsonage, and made little effort to secure a pastor for some time. Fortunately, Rev. Prof. J. E. Barb supplied these pulpits, and held these two congregations together during this era.⁴⁰

During Koepplin's service, the Synodical structure was also reorganized when the Concordia English District merged with the older Eastern District, which had converted nearly entirely to English. In 1919, the

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 60.

34. *Minutes of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Dovesville, Va., September 16-21, 1914, (Columbus, Ohio; Lutheran Book Concern: 1914), p. 14.*

35. *Minutes of the 39th Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held near Conover, N. Carolino, Sept. 1-6, 1915, (Columbus, OH, Lutheran Book Concern: 1915), pp. 14, 61, copy obtained from J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.*

36. *Minutes of the Fortieth Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Fulton, Md., September 13-19, 1916, (Columbus, Ohio; Lutheran Book Concern: 1916), pp. 3-4.*

37. *Minutes of the Forty-First Annual Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Woodstock, Va., September 5-10, 1917, (Columbus, Ohio; Lutheran Book Concern: 1917), pp. 36-37.*

38. *Church Book - St. Mark's. Stiver, p. 6.*

39. *Ibid.* See also *Concordia District Minutes of 1817*, p. 8.

40. *Minutes of the 42nd Regular Convention of the Concordia English District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held at Hickory, N. C., September 4 to 11, 1918, (Columbus, OH, Lutheran Book Concern: 1919), pp. 4,9,28, viewed from J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.*

merger movement was consummated at the annual meeting in Baltimore, and the forty-fourth annual meeting of the Concordia District became its last. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brentwood, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania was host to the first "combined" district meeting beginning October 20, 1920. Devotions by President J. F. C. Soller of the Eastern District and President L. M. Hunt of the Concordia District opened the sessions. Soller presided over the morning sessions, and Hunt, the evening. On Monday, October 25, the sessions were formally closed, the Concordia District ceased to exist as a separate identity, and St. John's was a member of the Eastern District.⁴¹

Also by 1921, St. John's cooperated with St. Mark's, and purchased an interest of \$250.00 in a parsonage in Claremont. This agreement was signed by R. C. Sigmon, J. B. Sigmon, and M. L. Sigmon from St. John's, and by J. T. Sigmon, M. W. Cloninger, and Calvin Sigmon from St. Mark's.⁴²

St. Mark's and St. John's congregations met "in an orderly meeting" on May 21, 1922 for the purpose of selecting a pastor to replace Koepplin. Candidate Oscar Braunschweig from St. Paul, Minnesota, was chosen. He accepted the call and was installed by Rev. Puffenberger on August 20.⁴³

The pastorate of the two congregations was besieged by another vacancy four years later. On October 6, 1926, Braunschweig received a call from a congregation in Marshfield, Wisconsin. A joint congregational meeting was held at St. Mark's on October 17, resulting in a request that the call be returned. "After considering the matter seriously, he finally decided to return the call and stay as Pastor of said two congregation [sic]."⁴⁴

On March 17, 1928, Braunschweig received another call from a congregation in Benson, Illinois. Again, the two congregations voted unanimously for him to remain, but this time it was to no avail. The churches again found themselves without a pastor in April.⁴⁵

Another joint meeting of the two congregations was held in May of 1928. Student Lawrence A. Miller of Capital Theological Seminary was elected, and this proved to be a choice of excellent long-term merit. The Ohio native accepted, and was installed on August 3, 1928 by former pastor, Rev. L. M. Hunt. The Ohio Synod congregation at St. John's would never have another Called Pastor for the remainder of its history.⁴⁶

During the '20's, the congregation remained stable, with about 60 baptized members, and communicants numbering in the forties. Total assets were reported at \$2,000.⁴⁷

The year 1930 proved to be an important milestone for the Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States. For several years, there had been contemplations of unity between Ohio, the Iowa Synod, and the Buffalo Synod. On August 6th through 9th, the three synods met separately in Toledo, Ohio, to deliberate the conditions of the merger, Dr. C. Ackermann, Secretary of the Joint Synod, read the following acceptance:

Whereas, during the past several years the Lutheran Synod of Buffalo, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Iowa and Other States, and the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States have cooperated with one another, and

Whereas, out of this cooperation has come a desire often expressed by the assemblies of each of these three above-mentioned bodies to become more closely affiliated, and

Whereas, it appears to the members of each of the three bodies that a more perfect union will greatly enhance the ability of the three above-mentioned bodies to carry out the objects for which they were formed, therefore

41. *Minutes of the Seventy-Ninth Annual Convention of the Eastern District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, held in Zion Ev. Lutheran Congregation of Brentwood, Pittsburgh, Pa., Oct. 20-25, 1920, (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern: 1921), pp. 3, 16-17, 73-76.*

42. Church Book - St. Mark's. Although the date of transaction is not included in the St. Mark's minutes, the English District Parochial Report (p. 78) lists the parsonage for the first time in 1921.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.* Stiver, pp. 8-9.

47. *Minutes of the Eighty-Seventh Annual Convention of the Eastern District of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States, Held in First Lutheran Church, Canton, O., September 12-17, 1928, (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1928), 70-71, 76-77, 88-89, from the J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick.*

Be it resolved that we merge with the honorable Lutheran Synod of Buffalo and the honorable Evangelical Synod of Iowa and Other States and that a corporation be created under the constitution heretofore approved by the three above-mentioned bodies and that application be filed with the Secretary of State of Illinois for a charter.⁴⁸

A motion and second was followed by a unanimous rising vote of the delegates. At this moment, the last of the Synods organized by Paul Henkel and others, at Somerset, Ohio in 1818, ceased to exist.

The name adopted by the new organization was the "American Lutheran Church." The united body convened on August 10 with divine services and holy communion, administered by the three synod presidents and others. At the regular service which followed, over 4,000 were in attendance. On the following day, synodical business was transacted and officers were elected. The convention was concluded by a devotional service, conducted by President, Doctor C. C. Hein.

He expressed the wish that he be remembered in the prayers of the church and that former synodical affiliations be forgotten and all cooperate in the work of the American Lutheran Church for the glory of God.⁴⁹

In 1936, St. Mark's constructed a new parsonage, and it is assumed that St. John's continued its contributions towards the housing of the joint pastorate.

Just after World War II, the Missouri Synod congregation at St. John's was preparing to build another church building, yet the American Lutheran Congregation still maintained one-fourth interest in the property. After extensive negotiations, the minority interest was purchased by the Missouri Synod congregation, and the American Lutheran congregation found itself without a meeting place. Most members followed Pastor Miller to St. Mark's.⁵⁰

The trustees of the two congregations met to discuss the possible merger. Representing St. Mark's were Knox Carpenter, Edwin Hollar, and Jim Deal. St. John's representatives, Monroe Bumgarner, Fred Hemeter Sigmon, and Ralph F. Sigmon, offered \$2,150.00 to the treasury of St. Mark's with an agreement for temporary consolidation of the two congregations for a period of five years. It was stipulated that if the St. John's congregation elected to construct its own house of worship, the principal would be returned in full.⁵¹

After five years, the temporary transfers from St. John's would be allowed to vote for or against a permanent merger. This arrangement was accepted by the trustees of St. Mark's. What a difficult decision it must have been for those who walked away from St. John's -- the Church of their families for about one hundred and fifty years. Approximately fifty St. John's members received a cordial welcome from Claremont.⁵²

In 1950, by unanimous vote, the former St. John's American Lutheran congregation formally united with its sister, immediately necessitating a building program to enlarge the St. Mark's sanctuary.

And thus, the St. John's congregation that came into existence due to a sharp difference of opinion and controversy was dissolved with Christian brotherly love just over one century later -- by way of a conciliatory merger into a neighboring congregation.

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. Joshua 1:9.

48. Barger, pp. 36-37, cited from C. V. Sheatsley, D. D., *The Story of the Formation of the American Lutheran Church*.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 38, cited from *Minutes of the First Convention of the American Lutheran Church, held in St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Toledo, Ohio*.

50. See Chapter 15 for the details of these negotiations.

51. Stiver, p. 10.

52. *Ibid.*

CONGREGATIONAL GROWTH AMID UNCERTAINTY

. . . . *Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.* Matthew 21: 21

St. John's and Concordia, with great sadness, found themselves in need of a Pastor, as Bischoff was the first pastor to die in service since David Henkel in 1831. For most of 1911, St. John's was without Bischoff's service, and relied on Professors Haentzshel, Romoser, and Weiss for pastoral services.¹

Concordia Church, which had prospered in numbers during the 1890s and early 1900s, and had the college to attract newcomers to Conover, felt that it was of a sufficient size to support a pastor without participation from another congregation, and requested a release from the joint pastorate arrangement. St. John's then made contact with the congregation at Bethel, to investigate the possibilities of another alliance. The committee consisted of N. E. Sigman, P. M. Dellinger, M. L. Cline, W. L. Yount, B. E. Smith, and R. L. Rocket, in addition to the elders of the congregation.

Bethel was without a pastor, because Concordia College had recently called Rev. C. O. Smith to a professorship. Fortunately, Bethel had constructed a parsonage, so that issue would not become a major problem in attracting a minister. The August 20 joint congregational meeting was called to order and N. E. Sigman was elected chairman. The joint committee made its report, which agreed that the two congregations would form a joint pastorate. Each congregation would pay \$250.00 per year towards the salary, and alternate the pastor's services on Sundays, holidays, and catechising. The pastor was to furnish three months of teaching at Bethel's parochial school in exchange for use of their parsonage. Each congregation was to furnish one half of the firewood to the parsonage, which could amount to up to fourteen cords per year (estimated at \$1.50 per cord). In the event of increase in pastors salary or expenses, each congregation agreed to contribute equally. A Call was submitted to Reverend George E. Mennen by unanimous voice of the two congregations. At that time, Mennen was in charge of Ebenezer of Greensboro, and four mission stations in the Greensboro and southern Virginia area.²

The next week, the joint parish had the opportunity to hear Pastor Mennen preach, as he was present at the Southeastern Conference meeting at St. Peter's. Two days of the sessions were held in the library of Concordia College, with the subjects of discussion being "Missions" and "The Maintaining and Establishing of Parochial Schools." Other pastors who presented sermons or treatises were E. T. Coyner, C. A. Weiss, P. C. Henry, and G. A. Romoser. All parishes were encouraged to establish parochial schools.³

By September 3, when Mennen returned the Call, another joint congregational meeting was held, and a second Call was submitted to Pastor Mennen, dated September 17, 1911. He accepted on this occasion, and it was decided to have a single installation service for both Churches on the second Sunday of Advent, December 10, 1911, at Bethel Church. Officiating the ceremony was Professor C. A. Weiss, assisted by C. O. Smith. On the same day, Pastor Mennen performed his first St. John's baptism, Harry Lee Yount, son of W. L. and Dezzie Rowe Yount. Mennen preached his inaugural sermon the following week, conducted his first St. John's marriage between Evans Cleveland Hunsucker and Vertie Alice Cline on May 15, 1912, and officiated the funeral of Clarence Loy Hunsucker on May 10.⁴

1. *CBII*, Baptisms.

2. *Church Minute Book I*, 137-138, 183.

3. George E. Mennen, "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XXX, No. 19, 14 September 1911, p. 149.

4. *CBII*, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 136. C. A. Weiss, "Miscellaneous. Installations," *TLW*, Vol. XXXI, No. 1, 4 January 1912, p. 7.

By February 16, 1912, Pastor Mennen became pastor loci for the Southeastern Conference meeting held at St. John's. Among the topics of discussion were "Church Discipline," "The Gospel," "Christian Fellowship," "Christian Education," and "Missions." All local pastors were in attendance.⁵

The congregation, with its new pastor, proved interested in the home mission field in 1912, as collections were taken for a church building in Alexander County and for the mission in Asheville.⁶

An organizational change was instituted at St. John's. In the past, the pastor had usually served as chairman of congregational meetings. On the first Sunday in January, Mr. N. E. Sigman became the first recorded layman elected to serve in this capacity.⁷ By the beginning of 1913, communicant membership of St. John's was listed at 222 members.⁸

In August, Pastor Mennen was once more host to the Southeastern Pastors' Conference, which met at Bethel. Services were conducted on Saturday and Sunday, with sermons by A. L. Crouse, Ad. Haentzschel, Professor M. Lochner, C. A. Weiss, and C. O. Smith. The following Monday, the pastors retired to the Concordia College library for further topics, including, "The Status of Women in the Church," presented by A. L. Crouse.⁹

In May, the congregation was saddened by the loss of Rev. J. M. Smith. This is described in a previous chapter.

In 1913, the Sunday School outing was special. It was arranged to take a railroad excursion to Edgemont, with the round-trip cost being one dollar for adults, and no charge for children under 12. Excess proceeds from this outing provided for the presents at the Christmas Tree celebration and for interior repair to the Church. The pastor's salary was raised by one hundred dollars during the year, and Bethel agreed.¹⁰

After several years of discussion, wafers were adopted for use in the Lord's Supper.¹¹

With the huge success of the Sunday School excursion to Edgemont, a similar trip to Ridgecrest was investigated for the year 1915. It was arranged to have a charter trip, with the round-trip train fare being \$1.25 from Claremont and \$1.00 from Newton, Conover, or Hickory. The date was set for August 26.¹²

During 1915, a movement began to acquire property for a parsonage, as the available church property was entangled with the joint ownership by the three congregations. A committee was appointed in October to approach Mr. Marshall H. Yount regarding a tract of his property just east of the Church. Mr. Yount offered the property for \$75.00 per acre, up to eight acres. A month later, the congregation voted to buy four acres for \$300.00. Some of the proceeds from the Edgemont excursion were applied to this expense, with a committee being authorized to borrow money if necessary. During later years, the timber was harvested from this tract, and by the end of 1918, the property was paid for free and clear. Some of the proceeds from the sale of timber was used to repair the Church building.¹³

The Concordia congregation submitted a request in 1914 for St. John's and Bethel to release Pastor Mennen to their church. The St. John's Church Council was then to confer with Bethel concerning the matter. On November 27, the two congregations, with a unanimous rising vote, successfully requested Pastor Mennen to return the Call.¹⁴

The St. John's portion of Pastor Mennen's salary was \$352.00 by 1915. A year later, and after the threat of losing his services, a joint committee was established and the original joint pastorate agreement was revised, where St. John's would contribute \$450.00, and Bethel, \$350.00, for a yearly salary of \$800.00.¹⁵

But salary was not the only compensation received by the pastors, as . . .

5. C. O. Smith, "Notice," *TLW*, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, 12 January 1912, p. 16.

6. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 141.

7. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 144. Obviously, there were occasions when laymen were chairman of the congregational meetings, such as calling a pastor, dismissing a pastor, etc.. However, during routine meetings, the pastor usually served as chairman.

8. "Parochial Report," *TLW*, Vol. XXXII, No. 6, 13 Mar 1913, p. 43.

9. Walter O. Bischoff, "At Home," *TLW*, XXXI:19, 12 Sept 1912, 149. To the female readers: the author searched for this treatise with no success.

10. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 146, 150-151.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 155.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 159, 160.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 162-164, 171, 178-180, 186, 212.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 161, 169.

From all our pastors in Catawba County, N. C., have come reports of generous "poundings," or "pound parties," as they are called at other places, from the congregations. As a result, the pantries, larders, and poultry-yards show a state of unusual plenty. The members endeavor to make this a surprise affair on the pastor. They gather at the appointed time and place, and in a body call at the parsonage with the articles of generosity and good will.¹⁶

Once again, the congregation of St. John's was host to the Southeastern Pastors' Conference, which was held on February 18-20, 1916. On Friday, Rev. M. F. Kuegele presented a thesis on "The Kind and Degrees of Sin." The following day, the topics were "Christian Education" and "Missions." The idea of a Jubilee Fund to commemorate the 400th Anniversary of the Reformation was promoted at this meeting, and Professor H. B. Hemmeter, with a "glowing speech . . . aroused the enthusiasm of the people." The meeting was properly concluded on Sunday, with celebration of Holy Communion; the entire conference was described as "of great spiritual uplift"; and many participants spoke of "the blessings which had come to them."¹⁷

In 1916, the congregation voted to construct a garage to house the pastor's newest means of transportation -- an automobile.¹⁸ This vehicle was destined to travel over dirt roads for many more years.

On July 14 through 16, 1916, the area suffered one of the worst natural disasters in over a century, due to the continuous torrential downpour of an estimated 12-15 inches. This storm resulted in a major flood which washed away or significantly damaged nearly every bridge. The Catawba River was "filled with great masses of lumber, bales of cotton, parts of houses, trees, logs, . . . horses, cows, pigs, and all sorts of other things." Water broke through the earth banks at the end of recently-completed Lookout dam, and the torrent of water destroyed Catawba's railroad bridge just below. Damage to the crops in the fertile bottomlands was severe, and along the river, the crop loss was total. Communication with Catawba County was virtually severed from those to the east and north.¹⁹ This proved to be a slightly worse flood than the one reported by Ambrose Henkel to his brother in 1814, although during the earlier flood, a higher percentage of homes was located near the waterways. Early son of an original settler, John Yoder, made a mark of the South Fork River's high water during the 1814 disaster, and his son estimated the 1916 flood to have been four feet higher on that same portion of the Catawba River tributary.²⁰

To many of the St. John's members who were farmers, this natural disaster was devastating, and family lifestyle was severely disrupted. Disruption to church life is not known, and by August, attendance had returned to normal.²¹

On Sunday, October 29, 1916, in conjunction with a Southeastern Pastors' Conference, a large crowd assembled for the joint Reformation services at Concordia, including all Missouri Lutheran congregations in the area. Professor Hemmeter delivered the morning address. However, many were waiting to hear Pastor W. H. T. Dau speak that afternoon. Dau was then a Professor at the Seminary in St. Louis, and had become well respected for his theological writings throughout the Lutheran Church. Services were enhanced with music by the Concordia choir as well as by a student quartet from Concordia College.²²

Pastor Mennen received another Call to the Hickory Mission, consisting of St. Stephen's, Christ, and Augustana Churches. On September 16, 1917, the congregation met with representatives from Bethel, when it was determined to raise Pastor Mennen's salary to \$1,000.00 per year, and again convinced him to return the Call. The congregation adopted the envelope system of offering collection as a more regular method of paying the Pastor's salary.²³

16. M. J. Heinicke, "Church News. Southeastern Letter," *TLW*, Vol. XXXV, No.2, 25 Jan 1916, p.20.

17. M. J. Heinicke, "Church News. Southeastern Letter," *TLW*, XXXV:5, 7 March 1916, p. 73. H. B. Hemmeter, Geo. E. Long, & C. F. Bolch. *The Catawba County News*, XIV:6, 25 Feb 1916, hereinafter cited *CCN*.

18. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 168.

19. "The Big Rain of 1916," *CCN*, XIV:51, 18 July 1916.

20. See Chapter 4 for an account of the 1814 flood. "Col. G. M. Yoder Compares Freshet of 1814 With July 1916," *CCN*, XIV:53, 25 July 1816.

21. *CBII*, Communion Lists.

22. "Reformation Services at Conover," *CCN*, XIV:79, 24 Oct 1916.

23. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 176-177.

St. John's was again host to the Southeastern Conference meeting that fall, with the Sunday services consisting of a morning Gospel Service and an afternoon Mission Service. "The attendance on Sunday was especially good, when the church was full to overflowing and a large number had to remain on the outside." There was growing anticipation of the upcoming Reformation Jubilee.²⁴

The Reformation Jubilee was instituted by the Lutheran Church to commemorate the four hundredth anniversary of Martin Luther's posting of the ninety-five theses on the door of the cathedral at Wittenburg on October 31, 1517. A special fund-raising drive was promoted by the Synod, and St. John's and other area churches participated, with the Southeastern Conference raising between five and six thousand dollars. On October 16th, a special edition of the *The Lutheran Witness* was published to celebrate the event, with many appropriate photographs and historical articles. Area congregations were preparing for the fourth Sunday in October, when a joint Jubilee service was to be held at Concordia. A special mass choir was busily preparing for the event. St. John's appointed a committee to meet with the Concordia congregation to help coordinate the activities.²⁵

But the Reformation festival was not the primary interest of many who attended. An international political situation was weighing more heavily on their minds. The United States had entered the Great War in Europe on April 6, 1917, and young men were being recruited into the nation's service. As early as 1915, the English District of the Missouri Synod had a few comments relative to the war in Europe:

Resolution in Favor of an Embargo on Arms.

We, citizens of the United States, assembled from the various parts of our country, at St. Paul, Minnesota, for the purpose of a convention of the English District of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, in mass meeting, and conscious of our American lineage, as pure and as old as any, do resolve, that we ask the President of the United States to place an embargo on the sale and exportation of arms and ammunitions to the nations at war.

Because: First, such furnishing of munitions of war is manifestly inconsistent with the proclamation issued by Your Excellency, at the beginning of this war, asking for public prayers in behalf of the speedy restoration of peace; and

Because: Secondly, an embargo upon the furnishing of arms and ammunitions is entirely consistent with Your Excellency's appeal in favor of the application of the principle of a 'higher humanity' in the interest of the adjustment of the issues between this nation and the nations at war."

[Signed by the Committee] Henry Bernard Hemmeter, Chairman. William H. Dale, Secretary. W. H. T. Dau. C. H. Ruesskamp. Wm. Dallmann.²⁶

This resolution, and similar attitudes expressed by other Lutherans (and the German Reformed also), raised an unfounded suspicion as to the loyalty of those of German-speaking ancestry in Catawba County. Chairman Hemmeter was current President of Concordia College, Dau was a past college president, and Dallman had appeared in the area on a few occasions since 1891. Three of the four committee signatories had connections to Catawba County, and all three had preached at St. John's on occasion.

At a local Pastors' Conference in 1916, Professor Ad. Haentzshel presented a topic, whereby "it was shown that the reproach, so often heaped upon the Lutheran Church, of being a foreign Church is unjust and untrue."²⁷ At the beginning of the war, Dr. H. B. Hemmeter had made an ill-advised speech lauding a German battle victory over the French, and promoted pride in German heritage. This brought government agents to Conover, to keep an eye on the German professors' activities. Haentzshel's address was an obvious local attempt to diffuse adverse suspicions in and around Conover, and Dr. Hemmeter's loyalty to this country should never be questioned.²⁸ An occasional area sermon in German and teaching German at Concordia College did not serve to remove suspicion that there may still be a few local adherents to the Kaiser.

Some of English-speaking descent, harboring a long-dormant ethnic prejudice, felt that "no good thing can come out of Germany, and what is more, no good thing ever did come out of her." In some ways, they blamed

24. C. O. Smith, "Southeastern Conference Letter," *TLW*, XXXVI:22, 30 Oct 1917, 341.

25. C. O. Smith, "Southeastern Conference Letter," *TLW*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 22, 30 October 1917, p. 341. *The Lutheran Witness, Jubilee Edition*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 21, 16 October 1917. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 175, 177.

26. "Resolution in Favor of and Embargo on Arms," *TLW*, XXXIV:14, p. 125, 13 July 1915.

27. M. J. Heinicke, "Southeastern Letter," *TLW*, XXXV:26, 3 Oct 1916, 310.

28. The Hemmeter incident is cited from a five page historical sketch of Concordia, no author named, but it was written after 1957.

their neighbors of German heritage for the troubles in Europe. A Scottish minister referred to the entire war as "ascribed to two persons, Luther and Machiaveli"! The Lutheran press arose in self-defense. Articles appeared in several regions, and a few were transcribed into Catawba County newspapers. Most concluded that Lutherans would and should go into "just wars," and some cited Article XVI of the Augsburg Confession as the Lutheran authority for obedience to civil government.²⁹

President Woodrow Wilson did not entirely abate this discussion in an excellent Memorial Day speech in 1916. "America must come first." He prominently mentioned those that were not born on American soil, but did not name the various nations of Europe. President Wilson was proud of the healing of the Civil War wounds, and wished for a "single triumphant force."

We have no criticism from men who love the places of their birth and the sources of their origin. We don't wish men to forget their mothers and their fathers, their forbear running back through long-laborious generations which have taken part in the building up of the strength and spirit of other nations. No man quarrels with that. . . . But in some instances men have allowed their old ardor of another nationality to overthrow their ardor for the nationality to which they have given their new and voluntary allegiance.³⁰

The debate against German descendants was nationwide, as the State of Nebraska made accusations against its own college professors -- that they had engaged in "treasonable utterances, disloyal activity and passivity that has tended to give aid to Germany, an enemy." The reply was immediate:

To be a Missouri Lutheran is to be an American who not only fully appreciates the "protection and religious liberty" which our Church enjoys under the Constitution, but who is willing to expend life and treasure in upholding the best interests of his country. . . . Americans, awake! It is more than three months since the United States declared that a state of war existed between this country and Germany, and yet a stranger inquiring among the average men throughout the country would fail to gather that the United States was engaged in the greatest war that history has known. The majority of the people are apathetic. . . . Eyes burn; voices harden; a burst of passion appalls us. We shrink, as from a touch of naked savagery. . . . Our loyalty to country, our devotion to America is great, is complete. When it comes to shouldering a musket and going forth to kill, does he lay aside what Christ taught him? By no means. Even then he does not hate. He has simply become a part of the State's armor of defense against a foe. . . .³¹

By May 5, 1918, Pastor Mennen had received a Call, not to be a pastor at another church, not to "shoulder a musket," but to be a chaplain in the military. He presented this to the St. John's congregation for prayerful consideration. The congregation granted her Pastor a three month leave of absence if he felt obliged to serve both God and Country in this manner. A month later, the congregation appointed a committee to devise a plan for "looking after boys from our congregation who are now in camp, also those who may be called."³²

Pastor Mennen traveled to Camp Jackson in Columbia, South Carolina, where several local men were in training. He searched out the Catawba County men and made arrangements to speak with them individually. He reported that the men were in good spirits and were being fed well by Uncle Sam. Some of the men were quarantined in their barracks as a part of their training, and the yard outside was roped off. On occasion, Pastor Mennen would stand just outside the barrier, and it was not long before the men began singing favorite hymns "with might and main." This was followed by a sermon under the open sky. Mennen continued to serve these soldiers in a similar manner for several weeks, and gave calm assurance that "the Lord will protect them wherever they may be."³³

Even the patriotic activity by the St. John's pastor did not serve to cease local public criticism against German-heritage churches and their pastors. Through 1917 and 1918, national anti-German sentiment continued, and the Lutheran presses responded.³⁴ A Catawba County editorial stated, "We would like to ask these brethren

29. "The Lutheran Church Under Fire," *CCN*, XIII:95, 4 Jan 1916.

30. "President Wilson Defines Spirit of People of U. S.," *CCN*, XIV:38, 2 June 1916.

31. "Lutheran Loyalty," *TLW*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 16, 7 August 1916, pp. 237-239.

32. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 180-181.

33. "Letter From Rev. G. E. Mennen Who is Y. M. C. Worker at Camp Jackson," *CCN*, 13 Sept 1918.

34. See *CCN*, 25 Oct 1918, for a lengthy response by F. Bente, which explained how the Missourians had severed their ties with the German Lutheran Church, and had never associated with it since the mid-1800s.

[certain unnamed pastors] what their church or any other church would amount to if the Huns were to win this war? There would be no such thing as having the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of one's conscious [*sic*]."35 Obviously, this writer had not considered the enlistment lists, nor the efforts of Pastor Mennen.

In addition to the stream of cards and letters that were sent to those in the armed services, the Missouri Synod devised an easy method for forwarding church publications. At the top of the publications was the following printed notice:

When you finish reading this magazine, place a 1-cent stamp on this notice, hand same to any postal employee, and it will be placed in the hands of our soldiers or sailors at the front. *No Wrapping--No Address.* A. S. Burleson, *Postmaster-General*.36

In addition to her Pastor, the St. John's Missouri congregation provided several of its young men into the service of this country, including Ray Drum, Robert P. Hoke, John Holler, Oren O. Hunsucker, Robert Parker, James Reinhardt, John Reinhardt, Martin F. Sigmon, Clyde Simmons, Guy F. Smith, and Robert Travis. The Lord truly did protect these men as Pastor Mennen assured, and none became war casualties.³⁷

Simultaneous to the war, another issue of interest to the Lutheran Church was that of prohibition, which created political, moral, and some civil unrest. The Missouri Synod sent a letter of protest stating that such laws could "curtail personal liberties," and they further complained "about interference with the religious liberty of using wine, *real wine*, in the Lord's Supper."³⁸ By 1919, the bureau of internal revenue "endeavored to cut out all red tape" and "made the regulations easy" for established churches to obtain sacramental wine. Churches were required to pay the stipulated taxes and to keep accurate records. Often, an affidavit of the intended use of the wine was required to accompany the order.³⁹ IRS intended to cut out "red tape"? Some things do not change!

Yet another socio-political issue that had broiled into the front pages of the Lutheran press was that of secret societies. This subject had been steeping since the 1870's, and the editors of *The Lutheran Witness* were not restrained from publishing sarcastic articles against such social practices:

The negro Elks must select the name of some other animal if they care to maintain the name of an animal in their title. This is the gist of a decision which the Court of Appeals of New York handed down recently. The court suggested to the members of the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World that "there is a long list of beasts, birds, and fishes which have not yet been appropriated for such a purpose." Our sympathy is with the "beasts, birds, and fishes."⁴⁰

Rev. C. O. Smith had long been adamantly against these societies and clubs. His views likely reflect much of the membership of St. John's, or certainly those of the local ministers.

It is a well-known fact that modern churches of the sects are fast becoming kitchens and dining-rooms, but faster, club-rooms and entertainment halls. And it is also a fact--though it be a fact admitted with sorrow--that there are persons of the Lutheran Church and of the Missouri Synod who think that we are getting behind the time in not following their leadership and doing as they are so nobly and so successfully doing (as these people look upon it). . . . "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." And that is the thing which we should spend our time and money to bring to sinners, and not clubs and entertainments. . . . "Go ye and preach the GOSPEL to all nations," is the Church's work, her special province, and let her never, never try to do more, and, at the same time, less than God has ordered her to do.⁴¹

35. "The Minister and the War," *CCN*, 20 Aug 1918.

36. "Notice to Reader," *TLW*, several issues throughout the war.

37. This list was compiled through comparison of the World War I list in Presslar, pp. 396-412, and *CBII* Communion Lists. All listed names were absent from the latter lists after 1918. Apparently, Holy Communion was not held in 1919, probably making this list of soldiers incomplete.

38. "Communion Wine," *TLW*, XXXVI:15, 24 July 1917, 235.

39. "Churches May Get Wines for Sacramental Purposes," *CCN*, XVII:33, 22 Jul 1919.

40. "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XXXI, No. 13, 20 June 1912, p. 102.

41. C. O. Smith, "The Church and Men's Clubs," *TLW*, XXII:3, 29 Jan 1903.

After his return to the parish in fall of 1918, Pastor Mennen received another Call from Concordia congregation. A joint meeting was arranged with Bethel on December 1, and Pastor Mennen presented "a very impressive talk." A very gracious release was unanimously adopted, and written into the church minutes:

Be it Resolved that we the members of Bethel and St. John's congregations in joint session assembled, recognise [*sic*] the importance of the call extended our beloved Pastor, who has during the past seven years so faithfully and zealously served us at all times. That we now grant to him the privilege of either accepting or returning the call of Concordia congregation.

We ever praying urging and trusting that he may elect to stay with this pastorate. However, if after due deliberation and prayerful consideration [*sic*] he should decide to accept the call, we will with reluctant and saddened hearts abide by his decision and pray God's blessing rest on his labors in his chosen field.⁴²

Pastor Mennen then thanked the congregations, and advised them that he would accept the Call to Concordia, after which he consented to remain until after Christmas.⁴³ This resignation led to a year of total frustration, and an uncertain church-life at St. John's and Bethel.

A joint committee was immediately established to make recommendations for calling a replacement. At a called meeting on December 28, 1918, the congregation unanimously submitted a "solemn call" to Rev. W. D. Peters of the Asheville mission. The salary was stipulated at \$800.00 per year, plus a housing allowance for rent on a house. A professor was requested to supply the pulpit, with Pastor Mennen to perform the official acts of the congregation until a new pastor was obtained. Pastor Peters returned the Call. During a joint meeting where a quorum was not present, St. John's elected Rev. Goette of Virginia on February 16, pending Bethel's concurrence with this decision. He also returned the Call, stating that he had only been at his current location for a short time, and his work was not complete. A second Call was then re-submitted to Pastor Goette, but again failed to secure his services.⁴⁴

In June 1919, a fourth unanimous Call was extended to Rev. H. H. Gallman. The assembly then expressed their appreciation by a rising vote to Professor Henry Burandt, who supplied the pulpit during this period. As Pastor Gallman was recovering from surgery, and was still in the military, he was unable to accept.⁴⁵

A month later, a Call was extended to Pastor Swain of Concord, and a committee was established to confer with the Bethel Congregation relative to the Pastor's salary. It was proposed that St. John's pay \$600.00, provided Bethel meet a \$450.00 obligation. If this were accepted, it would be on a short-term basis, with St. John's reserving the right to withdraw from the joint pastorate arrangement. The counter-proposal from Bethel was that St. John's pay \$575.00, and Bethel pay \$425.00, which was accepted. Again, the congregations were disappointed when the Call was returned.⁴⁶ In September, Bethel selected Rev. Eugene Baily, and St. John's unanimously concurred. In October, a seventh Call was extended to Rev. George Traf, provided Bethel agree. By November, Traf returned the Call.⁴⁷

The two pastorless congregations prepared to host the Fifth Annual Convention of the English District of the Missouri Synod, which was to be held at Concordia from July 16 to 23, 1919. Each St. John's family was requested to provide room and board for the visiting pastors and delegates, and to notify the Council the number they could entertain.⁴⁸

Delegate P. M. Dellinger, along with about 110 Pastors and delegates from eighteen States, were in attendance, representing English congregations in a district that spanned from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and was differentiated by language, not geography, from the other districts of the Missouri Synod. The visitors were not favorably welcomed by typical Catawba County summer climate, as it rained nearly all week. On Wednesday

42. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 184-185.

43. *Ibid.*

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 186-189. "Diploma of Vocation, St. John's & Bethel to W. D. Peters," 29 Dec 1918, original document from the Rev. C. O. Smith papers. The Call was signed by B. E. Smith, P. M. Dellinger, of St. John's; J. D. Setzer, R. L. Hoke, C. C. Carpenter, of Bethel; plus pastor George E. Mennen.

45. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 191, 193. No baptisms are listed in *CBII* by either Mennen or Burandt during this period of vacancy.

46. *Ibid.*, 193-194.

47. *Ibid.*, 195-197.

48. *Ibid.*, 191.

morning, Rev. H. P. Eckhardt of Pittsburg delivered the opening sermon, and mentioned the troubling times of war. He stressed that the only true remedy to these conditions was the Word of God. This was followed by the Lord's Supper, with the confessional address by a minister from Detroit. Thursday's activities consisted of fairly routine business. In the afternoon, a doctrinal thesis was presented, and the rainy day concluded with a cancellation of the planned automobile tour through the surrounding area. On Friday, the President's report was given and discussed, an urgent plea for ministers was made, and Thursday's doctrinal thesis was discussed further. The following day began with an address on missions and the successes with the Stockbridge Indians in Wisconsin. The war, however, had significantly hampered mission work in other countries. On Sunday, Rev. W. H. Dale of Pittsburg delivered the sermon. The "basket lunch" was forced to be held in the College Chapel, "as usual," due to rain. The afternoon activities consisted of a sermon by Rev. F. C. G. Schumm of New York, and an interesting address by Professor George Romoser, then President of Concordia College in Bronxville, New York.⁴⁹

To host this convention took no small amount of preparation. The visitors were housed in Conover, Newton, and in the surrounding countryside, and arrangements were made to transport them back and forth to Concordia (usually in the rain). The noon meals were held in the College Chapel, with a different congregation responsible for each day. One day's feast boasted "chicken and good meats galore, cake, pies, pickles." Area boys helped with cleanup chores, and the girls washed dishes and waited on tables.⁵⁰ No complaints are known regarding Catawba County hospitality.

Back out on the hill in the business of securing a pastor, on December 15, a unanimous Call was extended to Rev. Charles J. Werberig of Los Angeles, with a salary offer of \$1,000.00, pending Bethel's concurrence. He accepted on Christmas Day. Finally after eight attempts, it was announced at the December 1919 meeting, that Rev. Charles Werberig, then serving in Bogalusa, Louisiana, had accepted the Call. The new pastor arrived in Conover on January 17, 1920. During most of the period from June until December, Prof. C. O. Smith was supplying the congregation, and he installed Werberig on January 18, 1920. Werberig's first regular sermon was delivered on February 1, his first baptism was Mabel Ellen Brady at her parents' house on March 7, his first marriage united Glenn Smith and Ila Simmons on June 30, and his first funeral interred Milton A. Abernathy on March 31.⁵¹

Upon Werberig's arrival, the congregation seemed at once invigorated, as a motion was placed before the congregation at its January meeting of 1821 to withdraw from the joint pastorate with Bethel.⁵² At the February meeting, the following was adopted:

Whereas we the St. John's Congregation realize that we should have divine services every Sunday with preaching and more sessions of Sunday School.

Whereas we desire as soon as possible to establish a parochial school, and

Whereas we realize that to have these blessings would require the full time of a pastor,

Be it resolved, that we, the St. John's congregation with the consent of Bethel congregation retains Pastor Werberig to serve our congregation only.

We also resolve to grant Pastor Werberig his present salary of one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) which he is now receiving as pastor of the St. John's and Bethel Parish.⁵³

A few significant obstacles faced the congregation and its desires to receive the means of grace on a more regular basis, as it still shared ownership of the church property with two other entities. How could there be divine services every Sunday, and more frequent Sunday School, when the agreement with the others limited building access to two Sundays per month?

49. "Great Meeting at Conover," *CCN*, XVII:30, 11 Jul 1919; "Lutheran Synod Meeting at Conover," *CCN*, XVII:33, 22 Jul 1919; "Report of English Synod of Lutheran Church in Session at Conover," *CCN*, XVII:33, 22 Jul 1919. *Church Minute Book I*, 192.

50. Mrs. G. E. Moehlmann to Walter Moehlmann, 4 Aug 1919, cited in Patton (no page numbers).

51. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 195-198. *CBII*, Baptisms, lists two baptisms by C. O. Smith prior to Werberig's arrival. *CBII*, Marriages. There is no listing in *CBII* for a Holy Communion service during 1919.

52. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 203.

53. *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204.

During the previous decade, the Reformed congregation had merged with that of Trinity in Conover, to form Trinity-St. John's. It held an occasional service at St. John's in order to maintain its interest in the property and the cemetery. Several approaches had been made to secure their use of the building. The Reformed interests in the Church property arose in 1914, and the Missouri Synod congregation unsuccessfully investigated the possibilities. Again in 1916, a committee was appointed to consider "renting of the Reformed's interest in the Church." An offer of \$1.00 per month was made for the use of the Church. After a favorable report, it was authorized to draw up a contract with the other congregation.⁵⁴

The Ohio Lutheran congregation had experienced fiscal and financial difficulties during this same period, and often was unable to contribute its one-fourth towards church improvement projects, such as roof work, painting, etc.. It relied on the supply services from the Pastor at St. Mark's in Claremont, and at one time was subsidized by the Ohio Synod.⁵⁵

At the January 1921 congregational meeting, a committee of J. K. Smith, W. L. Yount, and W. J. Sigman was appointed to explore the possibilities of gaining use of the Church on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. A month later, the committee was authorized to negotiate the price. Finally, in April, the committee proudly reported that the negotiations were complete, and the Missouri congregation was to pay rent of \$1.50 per month to the Reformed, and \$1.25 to the Ohioans for building use on their respective Sundays.⁵⁶

For the first time in well over one hundred years, a single congregation had predominant control of St. John's Church building all four Sundays of the month. Beginning on the first Sunday in May 1921, the congregation voted to hold services every Sunday, although on one Sunday of the month, services were in the afternoon or evening. Finally, with a full-time pastor and more liberal access to the Church building, new programs could be instituted. The youth seemed particularly important to Pastor Werberig, as he immediately organized a Walther League Society, and the yearly Sunday School picnic was held at one of children's favorite locations -- Catawba Springs Resort. Weberig's confirmation class of twenty-one met on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and sessions might last three or more hours. His teaching style was described as "strict," but by the end of the instruction, pupils boasted "that they knew every word in Luther's Small Catechism" by memory. Confirmation exercises were held on April 3, 1921.⁵⁷ The organization of a parochial school was never accomplished.

Other improvements were contemplated, such as the addition of a room to the back of the Church for convenience of the Pastor. This idea was eventually discarded.⁵⁸

About the turn of the year 1922, the membership assembled as normal on one Sunday morning, but Pastor Werberig did not appear. Concordia member C. R. Brady, Mayor of Conover, arrived sometime later and announced that there would be no services that day, as Pastor Werberig had experienced some legal difficulties and was locked up in the County jail. The crowd dispersed soon thereafter.

It was not unusual for a pastor to seek additional means of earning an income. Nearly all of the pastors in the eighteenth and nineteenth century had done this on their farms, or had engaged in other business enterprises. Many pastors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were connected to parochial schools or to Concordia College. Werberig became engaged as a stock broker. One of his preferences was "Black Cat Oil Stock." Some of the members believed this stock was a promising means of gaining or improving their wealth, and made investments. The stock truly proved to be a "Black Cat" -- not lucky -- worthless paper. Certain influential St. John's members soon became unhappy with their pastor.⁵⁹

54. *Ibid.*, p. 154, 168-169.

55. See Chapter 12 entitled "The Ohio Synod Lutherans."

56. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 203-206.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 206-207. *C.B.II.* Gaither Yount Conversation with Mark Smith, 27 Nov 1994. Mr. Yount was a member of this confirmation class.

58. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 208.

59. Catawba County Court Minute Docket Book, 13:55, July 1922, Catawba County Courthouse, Newton, NC. Criminal docket #45, "State vs. Charles W. Werberig, selling stock without a license. Judgement susp. upon payment of costs." The Judge was J. Bis Ray. By the time of the trial, Werberig had left Catawba County. He was not convicted, but paid the costs -- suggesting a private settlement. Charges of intentional fraud are not known, and the various papers that may have been associated with this criminal case have been destroyed.

Pastor Werberig's term of service, which began with promise, proved to be brief. On March 29, 1922, his resignation was accepted with a note of appreciation extended to him.

Rev. Charles Fredericks, Concordia College's Professor of English, German, Hebrew, Geometry, and Mathematics, was then requested to supply the congregation. On the fourth Sunday of October, a formal Call was sent to Prof. Fredericks, with a yearly salary of \$700.00 for services on all but the second Sunday of the month. This reduction in services was at least partially due to financial considerations, as the congregation had experienced difficulties in meeting the salary pledged to Werberig as a full-time pastor. When Fredericks accepted on January 14, 1923, the congregation once again found itself relying on Concordia College, and this required permission from the Missouri Synod. Professor Martin Coyner installed Fredericks into service at St. John's on March 4, 1923. An agreement was then made to share his rent with the College on a 50-50 basis.⁶⁰

Pastor Fredericks' first regular sermon was presented on March 11, 1923, based on the text, "that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." He soon found appeal with the congregation. When the organist was absent, the multi-talented Fredericks could sit down at the pump organ and lead the congregation in sacred song, then arise into the pulpit and deliver a capable sermon. On occasion, he could also be found out on a member's farm, pitching hay onto the back of the truck like one of the "hands."⁶¹

Under the leadership of Charles Fredericks, the congregation continued the activity begun under Werberig's brief term of service. In 1924, preparations began for a celebration for the 125th anniversary in May, with a motion to secure Dr. W. H. T. Dau to deliver a message. Neighboring congregations were invited to attend, and Concordia suspended its regular services to join in the festivities. Dau accepted the invitation, and also used his visit to participate in the commencement exercises at Concordia College, when a young man by the name of Fred W. Rockett graduated.⁶²

On June 1, 1924, the congregation assembled for the all day anniversary event. Similar to the centennial in 1899, the morning service began at 10:30, and the afternoon service, at 1:30. The morning's list of pastors included Reverends F. Freed, Walter Hunsucker, and George Long in addition to Pastor Fredericks and the Jubilee feature, Dr. W. H. T. Dau, whose message was based on Hebrew 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Interspersed were musical selections by the choir and congregation. The afternoon service included Pastors Robert Lail, James E. Summers, George E. Mennen, A. Setzer, and Prof. O. W. Kreinheder. Another speaker, who was not pressed to take early final exams in a St. Louis library, was Prof. C. O. Smith, who again read a "History of St. John's Congregation" -- a different version than the one he delivered twenty-five years earlier.⁶³

At a later congregational meeting, Dr. Dau was given a special resolution of gratitude for his inspirational message on the anniversary festival.⁶⁴

After many fund-raisers, the Ladies Aid Society presented the congregation with "an excellent new organ," two "beautiful chancel chairs," and rubber mats for the aisles of the church. A year later, the Deacons were charged with devising some means of protecting the organ.⁶⁵

The Sunday School picnic of 1925 was a joint picnic sponsored by the Sunday School Association.⁶⁶ In 1926, this picnic was held at the College. The youth were important to Pastor Fredericks, as he led the re-establishment of a "Young Peoples Society," which later became named the Walther League.⁶⁷

In 1925, the Grave Yard Committee decided to cease the free use of the cemetery "for other than members of St. John's congregation."⁶⁸

60. *CBII*, Pastors. *Church Minute Book I*, pp. 209-210, 212.

61. *CBII*, Pastors. Gaither Yount conversation with Mark Smith, 27 November 1994.

62. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 216. Concordia's participation was taken from a brief history of that church, author unknown.

63. *Program, 125th Anniversary of St. John's Lutheran Congregation*. The ushers, Glenn Smith, Guy Smith, Carl Yount, Wm. Rockett, and Walter Dellinger, were named on the reverse of the Program. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 219.

64. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 217.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 222.

66. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

68. *Ibid.*, 222-223.

The remainder of Pastor Fredericks' era at St. John's saw several fiscal improvements. The congregation participated in the reduction of the debt on the Girls' Dormitory at Concordia College; they purchased new Sunday School Hymnals; an addition to the altar was constructed; two new toilets appeared on the landscaping; the exterior woodwork was painted; the floor was repaired; and a new communion set was obtained. The congregation also supported the Negro Mission in Conover by allowing Pastor Fredericks to occasionally preach there. St. John's continued hosting such events as Pastors' Conferences and Sunday School Conventions.⁶⁹

On August 5, 1928, Pastor Charles Fredericks received a Call to East Northport, Long Island, New York. The congregation encouraged him to return the Call, and offered him an increase in salary. Nevertheless, Fredericks felt obliged to accept the Call, and the congregation supported his decision with a letter of appreciation.⁷⁰

With the arrangements for temporary supply left in the hands of the Elders, the Council was faced with renewing its agreement with Concordia College, rather than selecting a pastor independent from the College. On September 16, after quite a bit of discussion concerning the possibilities of Professors Hemmeter, Lindemeyer, or Rockett, the selection was postponed. Business moved instead to the cemetery and the repair of the road in front of the church.⁷¹

A week later, Professor O. W. H. Lindemeyer agreed to supply the congregation, and preached his first regular sermon. On October 7, he was Called to be pastor. He accepted, and was installed by Prof. C. O. Smith on December 16, 1928.⁷² During the following week, the Call was made unanimous, suggesting some confusion existed within the congregation, or that there was some irregularity with the original Call.

Lindemeyer had been educated at the St. Louis Seminary, and, similar to Fredericks, was teaching English, Greek, Science, and Mathematics at Concordia College. He had previously served congregations in St. Louis, Charlottesville, and Conover, and had worked as an assistant editor at Concordia Publishing House.⁷³

Pastor Lindemeyer's "firsts" in family pastoral services were the following: first baptism, Lena Pearl Hollar, daughter of Guy E. and Pearl Sigmon Hollar on October 21; first funeral, Everett Gerhardt Sigmon, who died on November 12 at the age of 18; first marriage, L. A. Yount to Bessie O. McGee on February 3, 1929.⁷⁴

In 1929, the Missouri Synod gave a salary increase to the Professors of Concordia College, and insisted that they discontinue the time-sharing arrangement with area congregations -- an arrangement which had been mutually beneficial to college and congregations for decades. The Missouri Synod forced Pastor Lindemeyer to resign at St. John's with little input from pastor or people. The resignation was tendered on August 25, 1929, but was not accepted by the congregation until September 15. Pastor Lindemeyer delivered his final sermon, in a supply role, on September 29, 1929.⁷⁵ St. John's offered their resolution of respect:

Resolved, That in the person of Rev. O. W. H. Lindemeyer, pastor of St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church of Conover, N. C. we have ever found an able and sincere preacher of God's Word; of genuine piety and of spiritual depth; modest and unassuming, seeking not his own but the good of others; sympathetic, a true friend to all; a faithful servant of God, a Christian gentleman.⁷⁶

Confusion reigns in the St. John's records regarding the next pastor. The Church Minutes state that on December 15, 1929, St. John's Called the young Pastor George Dolak, from Texas. Yet the Church Register relates that he was installed by Professor Lindemeyer on October 20 -- two months earlier. There is little written evidence to reconcile this conflict in dates, unless Pastor Dolak was installed as a "supply" pastor. However, the reversal of the Synod's position about their professors serving area congregations becomes interesting. Dolak arrived in Conover -- as a **Professor of Concordia College** -- on October 2, 1929. He was a 1927 Seminary

69. *Church Minute Book II*, 6-12. J. K. Smith, W. L. Yount, and Wm. Rockett were on the altar and toilet committee, with F. E. Baker and L. A. Yount to raise funds for these projects. The Ladies' Aid helped with the Girls Dormitory debt and the communion set.

70. *CBII. Church Minute Book II*, 13-14.

71. *Ibid.*, 13-14.

72. *CBII*.

73. *The Carillon*, 1930, 9.

74. *CBII*, Baptisms, Funerals, Marriages.

75. *Church Minute Book II*, 18; *CBII*.

76. Loose paper in *Church Minute Book II*.

graduate and had taught briefly at the University at Springfield, Illinois. Upon departure of Professor Fredericks, the College needed a professor in the ancient languages. Dolak accepted the position, the Synod reconsidered its former position, and Dolak was allowed to become full-time pastor at St. John's. Perhaps "Black Friday" on Wall Street and the corresponding crunch in the synodical budget had become more important than separation of Church and School. The destiny of St. John's continued to be connected to that of the College, regardless of the previous resolution.⁷⁷

When Pastor Dolak arrived, he visited the congregation and observed a service conducted by Professor C. O. Smith (who apparently supplied during the interim). The following week, he presented his first service in similar manner, without change in routine. He and his wife blended into the fabric of the congregation nicely, and were soon very popular.⁷⁸

Among Dolak's few private ministerial acts were his first St. John's baptism of Donald Ray Parkhurst, son of Charles Nye and Eula Sigmon Parkhurst, on March 17, 1930, at their home. His sole funeral was that of Mrs. Anna Roseman, who died on December 14, 1929.⁷⁹

Partially due to his linguistic skills, Dolak soon received and accepted a Call from a Massilon, Ohio, congregation, and was received into the Slovak Lutheran Synod. Pastor Dolak delivered his last sermon from the St. John's pulpit on the third Sunday of July, 1930. The congregation voted to give him a resolution of thanks with his peaceful dismissal. Dolak later authored a book entitled *A History of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America, 1902-1927*.⁸⁰

Again, the congregation turned to the College. They requested Pastor Lindemeyer to return as a supply pastor. He could not accept, as he had made commitments to other congregations. Remember that Lindemeyer had resigned from St. John's due to the judgment of the Missouri Synod that professors could not serve area congregations.⁸¹ What was going on here? Why was Lindemeyer again serving other congregations? "Black Friday"? Synodical deficits?

Old reliable -- Rev. Prof. C. O. Smith -- "willingly" consented to supply until another pastor was obtained.⁸²

The nearly two decades after Pastor Bischoff's death proved to be a period of congregational growth amid uncertainty. The War and other political issues disturbed the church and its families. The St. John's relationship with Concordia College was convenient and financially expedient, but fostered inconsistency due to the transient nature of the out-of-state Professors that were dispatched to Conover. The attempt of the Missouri Synod to distance its Professors from area congregations was absolutely contrary to the original mission of the English Missouri Synod in Conover back in the 1890s, as well as its profitable endeavors in later years. St. John's, and other Missouri Synod congregations in the area, would suddenly recognize the lack of respect from the parent Synod a few years later! They again would speak out in plain Catawba County language. They'd lose one major battle, then win another one.

So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

1 Corinthians 3:7

77. *Ibid.*, 19; *CBII, The Carillon*, 1930, 10.

78. Gaither Yount Conversation with Mark Smith, 27 Nov 1994.

79. *CBII*, Baptisms, Funerals.

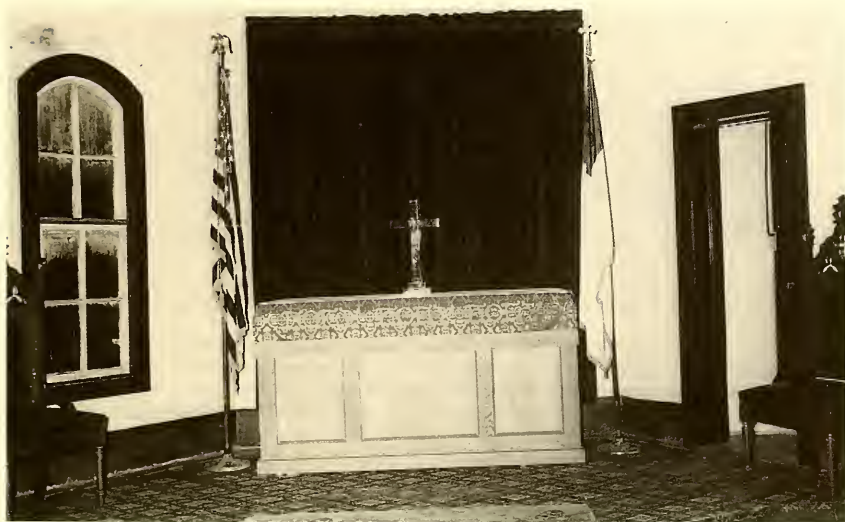
80. *CBII; Church Minute Book II*, 23-24; Rev. John Body, Ed., Rev. John Shintay, transl., *History of Slovak Zion Synod, LCA*, (no publ. name, 1962), p. 112. Copy of latter source is in Rudisill Library, Lenoir Rhyne College.

81. *Church Minute Book II*, 23-24.

82. *Ibid.*, 23-24.



St. John's School (1920) located on current gym lot



Altar in first brick church (1883-1948)
CONGREGATIONAL GROWTH AMID UNCERTAINTY - 315

SURVIVAL AND REVIVAL

For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. Lamentations 3:31-33

The world, often only as rumored in Catawba County, changed drastically between 1900 and 1930. The Boxer Uprising occurred in China in 1901. In 1904-5 the Russo-Japanese War occurred. The Second Hague Conference was held in 1907. The establishment of the Chinese Republic occurred in 1912. The most momentous event, the World War, with all its evils and blessings, was from 1914 to 1918. To these upheavals and aftermath, there must be added the Convention of the League of Nations, 1919; Russian Bolshevism; Italian Fascism; and the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Naval Armaments.

The map of Europe very much changed its complexion during the thirty year period. A Russian Czar, a German Kaiser, and an Austrian emperor became past history. Italy, Spain, and even England, experienced internal changes. The United States grew to be immensely wealthy and rose to be an even greater power among the nations of the world than it was before. Within its borders, federal authority was extended and centralized, and States' rights, formerly much cherished, were to some extent disappearing. The attempt at Federal control of education was perhaps an indication of this trend.

Other outstanding events which characterize the tendency of the times were the enactment of woman's suffrage and the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment.

This period was noted for many valuable inventions, which came into use by the public. President McKinley took his first ride in an automobile in about 1900, and pronounced the experience pleasant, but said that he preferred horses. Within three decades, the horse-drawn vehicle, especially for pleasure purposes, almost entirely disappeared. The airplane was developed during the war, and afterwards was used to carry the mail and also, to a very small extent, for other purposes. The motion-picture industry increased to tremendous proportions during this era, under a highly-skeptical clerical eye. The most wonderful invention, the radio, which also quicker than any other modern invention, found its way into the homes of the people. While during the last of the nineteenth century there existed the telephone and electric lights and other inventions and conveniences; these, however, first came into general use during the early part of the twentieth century.

A typical house was lit by oil lamps at the end of the nineteenth century, and people walked or traveled by horse and buggies, if at all. Stoves in the homes were quite common in those days, and furnaces or boiler heating systems were rarely found except in the better homes, usually to be found in the larger cities. Indoor plumbing was virtually unknown. The list of new personal and family conveniences would continue.

The commercialization and industrialization trend continued in Conover. In 1919, the City began its first major utility project, wells were dug and new water and sewer lines were installed to about five to eight blocks square near the center of town and to those industries stretching along the railroad. A decade later, the town celebrated the turning on of electric lights. Concordia College continued to attract new residents to town -- some of whom were from out of state.¹ In 1922, Catawba County witnessed construction of its first "hard surface road."²

The natural landscape of northern Catawba County changed more dramatically than in any other era, when Southern (later Western Carolina) Power Company began constructing dams across the former "Great Catawba River" to harness the hydroelectric power for the production of electricity. First was that of Lookout Dam, which was located just below the old Island Ford Crossing. The old road was re-routed slightly and a new bridge was built just below the dam. This bridge was estimated to cost "in the neighborhood of \$15,000," and was operated as

1. *Town of Conover, Water and Sewer Map, 1919.*

2. "Catawba County to Get First Hard Surface Road," *Catawba News Enterprise*, XVII:48, 24 Feb 1922.

a toll bridge for several years.³ Later a larger dam was built about a mile east of the old Oxford Ford, resulting in what became Lake Hickory. To facilitate the transportation of men, machinery, and materials to this massive project, a new road was constructed from Oxford Ford Road about two miles north of Conover, following the approximate route of North Carolina Highway 16, to the new bridge, located just below the dam. This became the major north-south artery through the community, and its route was situated about a mile to the east, and within sight of the old Henry Pope homesite and St. John's Church.⁴

In the Lutheran Church of America, the merging in 1918 of the General Council, the General Synod, and the United Synod of the South into the United Lutheran Church was significant to Catawba County citizens.

Fred Wilford Smyre Rockett was witness to most of these changes. He was born the son of Robert Lee and Emma Alverta Dellinger Rockett on August 24, 1906. His early years were on a farm about two miles northeast of St. John's. His father, after seeking his fortune as a timber surveyor in Maine and at an orange orchard in Florida, settled near his old homeplace with his new bride. The farm was about typical for Catawba County during era, fully equipped with all the essential buildings -- a barn, a carriage house, a potato house, a smoke house, and a spring house. In 1911, his family moved to Conover due to the educational opportunities the small town afforded for the growing family, and the young Rockett attended Concordia Church's parochial school, and later Concordia High School and Junior College, where he graduated in 1924.⁵

It was always Emma Rockett's dream that her son Fred become a minister. He enrolled in Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and in his second year, accepted the vicarage under Pastor Mennen at Conover. After a return to the Seminary, he graduated in June 1928, and resumed his vicarage in South Dakota. The year 1929 was the proudest in Emma Rockett's life, when Fred W. Rockett was ordained as a Lutheran minister of the Gospel, to serve the congregations of Immanuel and Redeemer in Catawba County. His return to the area was just after "Black Friday" on Wall Street, and the financial and economic depression soon became serious business.⁶

Pastor Rockett relates the local circumstances upon his return to Conover. "The farms were smaller and they did not sell." The results of this were that area residents "toughed it out."

They had a house, they could raise enough to eat, they could patch clothes, even if they had no money in the pockets. The manufacturing plants were not so large [as they are today], and not so many living by their work. So we were not hurt as those in the city. Also we did not have so much to lose.⁷

This was the economic situation when St. John's tendered its next Call for a Pastor. On September 7, 1930, the congregation appointed Carl Yount and C. D. Sigman to deliver the Call to Professor Rockett. How could he refuse the invitation of his family's church? The Immanuel congregation resisted the loss of its Pastor, and requested that St. John's form a joint pastorate to share Rockett's services. The St. John's congregation agreed, and Rockett was installed by Rev. C. O. Smith, his former history teacher, on September 21, 1930. With permission of the parish, Pastor Rockett attended Lenoir-Rhyne, completed his degree in Ancient Languages in June 1932, and instructed Greek, Hebrew, and History on a part-time basis at Concordia College.⁸

The sharing of Pastor Rockett's services between the two congregations required some planning. He preached at St. John's on three Sundays per month, with the Ohio Congregation using the building on the remaining Sunday. Missouri had agreed with Ohio for use of the building on the afternoon of "their" Sunday in exchange for organ usage. Immanuel held services on one Sunday morning and three afternoons per month.

3. "Iredell, Catawba And Power Company Agree on Bridge," CCN, XIII:97, 11 Jan 1916.

4. Conversation with St. John's member George Lafone by Mark Smith, 1994. Mr. Lafone related that he made his "first dollar" as a laborer on construction of the road that became Highway 16. Prior to this, the old Oxford Ford Road ran past his house.

5. Letter from Rev. Fred W. Rockett to the author, received 31 May 1994, hereinafter referenced "Rockett Letter." This letter was in answer to a letter, with many questions on various St. John's related subjects from the period of about 1890 to 1955. His answers were often very inciteful.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*

8. *CBII. Church Minute Book II*, 23-24. Rockett Letter. As with Dolak, there is some discrepancy between the Church Register and the Minutes regarding the exact date of the Call to Pastor Rockett.

Typically, no services were held at either congregation on a fifth Sunday of the month. This time-sharing arrangement was in effect for over two decades, with occasional minor modifications and minimal complications.⁹

Pastor Rockett's first personal ministerial acts at St. John's included the Baptism of Bobby Lee Huffman, son of Ross and Rena Lafone Huffman, on January 24, 1931, at the parsonage. His first marriage was between Howard G. Baker and Violet V. Yount, on March 14, 1931. He also performed his first consoling funeral sermons for three members of the Cline family: the 77 year old Mark Cline died on December 31, 1930; Jason Cline died on March 2, 1931; and Mrs. B. S. Cline died the following June 25, 1930.

But the effects of the depression during Rockett's early period of service plagued the congregation. By the end of 1930, there was a \$70.00 shortfall on the pastor's salary of \$800.00. 1931 followed with a total shortage of about \$200.00, and by the end of 1932, the situation worsened. Pastor Rockett realized the financial plight of the congregation, and graciously offered that he would take a ten percent cut in pay if the congregation would make its payment on a monthly basis. The congregation resolved to find "ways and means to comply with the acceptance of the Pastor and Church Council's proposition."¹¹

The economic situation did not improve in 1933, as the congregation found itself unable to pay the \$60.00 monthly payment, and more. The men of the congregation suggested borrowing the money from the Ladies Aid Society. Pastor Rockett said "NO! Go to the bank!" The congregation then borrowed \$58.00 from the Synod Fund and \$100.00 from other sources. As indebtedness was to be avoided at all costs during this period, the church soon found a way to pay off the debt, and the pastor was henceforth paid in a timely manner.¹²

For financial reasons, the congregation also elected not to send a delegate, except for the Pastor, to the Synod meeting of 1933.¹³

Although they had little cash in the treasuries, the congregations began to make improvements to the property. Sidewalks were constructed in the church yard through the generous donation of forty sacks of cement by Henry Cline, and the labor, sand, etc., was provided by the membership. The cemetery had always been a source of regular maintenance. This work normally consisted of cutting down the brush, brambles, and weeds. Then the vegetation was hoed, and the area was raked until the grounds were a smooth, clean, earthen surface. In 1931, the congregations elected to sow peas on this area. Later that year, a committee was appointed to sow grass. Many of the materials were paid for by the Ladies Aid, and the men did the work. But the Ladies Aid members, themselves, installed the new shrubbery to beautify the cemetery.¹⁴

The activities of the Missouri Congregation did not subside due to the economic conditions. A movement was instituted to encourage the younger members to become active participants in the congregational affairs. The Sunday School Association held its meeting in May of 1931, where there was "dinner on the grounds" and Pastor James L. Summers provided an address. The harvest home collection was designated towards the long-standing debt on the Girls' dormitory at the College.¹⁵

As many members were returning to "public work," a few dollars came forth, and previously-impossible dreams transformed into possible goals, and then, proud achievements. Nearing the end of the depression, Henry Cline again was generous, by the offering of a Church bell, which was graciously accepted by the congregation.¹⁶

The congregation was growing and industrious, and a movement towards construction of a Sunday School building was contemplated. At that time, there were about five classes and one adult class, and the noise was a significant distraction in the one-room Church. A Building Committee of P. M. Dellinger, C. D. Sigman, L. A. Yount, Glenn Smith, Lee Cline and James Simmons was appointed to obtain the plans for construction and

9. Rockett Letter.

10. *CBII*, Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals. During 1996, as this chapter was nearing completion, Mrs. Violet V. Yount Baker passed to her heavenly reward. She taught Sunday School at St. John's for decades, and had the probable displeasure of teaching this sometimes-boisterous author at a young age. She was a devoted member of the St. John's Ladies Aid, and was visible at nearly all of their functions. Violet Baker ("Aunt" Violet, we called her), and all other women like her, are the unsung heroes of St. John's. There is not space to mention them all.

11. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 28, 30, 31, 35, 36, 40.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 40. Rockett Letter.

13. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 41.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 28, 30. *CBII*. Conversation with Wayne M. Smith by Mark Smith, 1994.

15. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 28-31.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

estimates of cost. A Finance Committee of D. F. Smith, D. A. Yount, Walter Dellinger, and Marvin Brady was organized. The recommendation was approved for a building 22 X 60 feet. The congregation was canvassed to gain contributions of "money, timber, and work." Timber was cut from the parsonage lot, and this portion of the work was placed in the hands of the Church Council. As the two other congregations did not participate in this building, no joint committee meetings were necessary, and the work proceeded with great speed. By March of 1934, the contract was awarded and work had begun. Timber was cut, hauled, sawed, and ready. As the labor was performed, the congregation came forth with donations to "pay off the hands."¹⁷

On May 13, 1934, the new Sunday School and recreational building was dedicated, with Professor C. O. Smith delivering the sermon. The congregation, which struggled to pay her pastor a year or so prior, constructed and paid for the new building by the date of dedication. The pastor was now able to hold his classes with about 75 in attendance, which was "better than the men sitting around outside" while the children were being taught. "The members of St. John's looked with much pride upon this gift of the Lord, which he had given them through their own hands."¹⁸

The building was of wood frame construction over a basement. On the east end, a Kitchen was incorporated. The building soon became known as "the Hut" and was used for numerous activities. Many church groups preferred to use this building in lieu of the Church, as it was smaller, and its wood stoves could heat it up much faster in the winter season.¹⁹

The next construction project was the installation of a door from the right side of the Church proximate to the Sunday School building. As this required the approval of, and cooperation from, the other congregations, six months were consumed before the work was completed. Another minor project was the installation of new lighting in the Church. The committee investigated "aladdin" and "acetylene" lighting systems, with the former being preferred.²⁰

Soon thereafter, a pastor from the United Lutheran Synod was visiting at a vespers service with a relative. At the beginning of the sermon, Pastor Rockett placed his newly-purchased lamp on the organ, and proceeded with the sermon without sufficient light to read. The visiting pastor was favorably impressed, and commented that St. John's had found themselves a capable pastor.²¹

A curious fund-raising experiment, entitled "Lord's Acre," was instituted to help defray the Sunday School Building expenses. Each farmer was encouraged to designate one acre, plant it with suitable cash crops, and donate the proceeds from the harvest to the Lord. This program had mixed results, but accrued up to \$500.00 or more into the building fund in some years, and was continued after completion of the Sunday School Building.²²

By the beginning of 1935, the pastor's salary was restored to the amount originally agreed upon when Pastor Rockett accepted the Call, and the congregation was moving forward.

A "Summer School" was inaugurated, which became the predecessor of "Vacation Bible School." There were little or no prepared synodical materials for this type of program, and its format was left up to Pastor Rockett.



St. John's Church (1883) with
Paul Wagner in 1935

17. *Ibid.*, p. 43-47. Rockett Letter.

18. *CBII*. Rockett Letter.

19. Conversation with Wayne M. Smith by Mark Smith, 1994.

20. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 48-57.

21. Gauthier Yount Conversation with Mark Smith, 1994. The visiting pastor was Uncle Alonzo Yount.

22. Rockett Letter. Proceeds from this program vary wildly, and are not always included in the available Church Records.

Bible stories constituted the main instruction. To interest the twenty-five or so children, Rockett painted a 4' X 4' sheet of plywood with a baseball diamond, with pitcher's mound. The class was divided into two teams. Rockett was always the pitcher, who hurled Bible questions at the batters. If the "pitch" was answered correctly, the student made a hit, and threw a dart at the baseball diamond to determine whether it was a single, double, triple, or home run.²³

Another learning innovation was the use of a map of Palestine. The students would throw a dart at the map. Wherever the dart landed -- on a city, mountain, lake, or country side -- the student was asked to tell a relevant story. At recess -- yes -- there was a ball game. Summer School proved to be a great success with large attendance. After the first few years, Pastor Rockett gained valuable assistance from a "faithful helper," Berman E. Smith.²⁴

When Concordia College burned and the Synod elected not to re-build, the congregation faced a previously-unresolved predicament. Pastor Rockett was living in the Professor's House at the northwest corner of the College property. The advisability of obtaining a parsonage was brought before the congregation for consideration in 1935. Since Rockett was still serving the Immanuel congregation, a committee was formed to confer with them about purchase or construction of a parsonage. After several meetings, many options were raised, including the consolidating of Immanuel and St. John's congregations. On May 17, 1936, a joint parish was formed between the two churches, and a Building Committee of Henry Cline, Chr., C. D. Sigmon, Caswell Baker, P. M. Dellinger, and L. A. Yount was appointed. The committee made a successful offer of \$2,000 for purchase of the "President's House" at the southeast corner of the College campus. The next week, a joint meeting was held with the Immanuel congregation, where a written working agreement was approved. The expenses were prorated at 3/4 from St. John's and 1/4 from Immanuel. By the time the deed arrived in September, the \$1,500 was pledged with a surplus, Pastor Rockett moved diagonally about one block into his new and larger home, and St. John's became co-owner of its first parsonage. The committees were released by 1937.²⁵

The history of this house is entwined into the College. On June 5, 1903, Professor C. Alvin Weiss purchased the lot from Robert S. and Alva Simmons, and soon had constructed one of the finer homes in Conover, for an estimated cost of \$2,800. The two-story house was one of the more distinctive houses on the street, with its modified hip roof and various projecting gables enclosing nine rooms. It boasted a wrap-around porch on the front and left, with an obvious truncation that distinguished it from the other houses on the street. It had bay windows facing each street, as was a popular architectural feature of the day. Its architectural style might be described as a modified "Victorian," with somewhat less "gingerbread" than is often seen. If not the earliest modified-Victorian house in Conover, it was certainly among them, and is the earliest-known house of this style.

Perhaps the most unusual amenity of the Weiss house was the installation of indoor plumbing in an era of out-houses, and nearly two decades before municipal utilities were available. Local lore suggests that this was the first house in Conover to provide this luxury, and a storage tank in the attic is remnant of a primitive residential plumbing system.

Upon Weiss's resignation, the house was purchased on July 14, 1913 by Concordia's Pastor, Walter O. Bischoff, for \$2,500.00 (a \$300.00 loss to Weiss). More surprisingly, Bischoff and his wife Clara soon sold it for a \$200.00 loss to the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, on June 14, 1914 -- a few months after Professor Hemmeyer's arrival. The Synod funded this purchase in entirety.

Thence it became known as the "President's House" of Concordia College. Upon the demise of the College, Synod cut off payment to its professors and essentially evicted them from its housing, when Hemmeyer was again living in the house. Pastor Rockett served the two congregations, so his fortunes were better than the other three. Also, when the former "President's House" was purchased, Rockett was able to keep a cow which he bought from Carl Yount. There was also a barn, a chicken house, and a nice garden plot on the one acre lot. So with St. John's, Immanuel, the parsonage, the cow, the chickens, and the garden, Pastor Rockett's family "never went hungry," and "had a wonderful time." Quite the contrary, Professor C. O. Smith owned his own house, but found himself as an unemployed 61 year old pastor. Even worse were the circumstances of Professors Lindemeyer and Hemmeyer. Lindemeyer, who was forced by the Synod to resign as Pastor of St. John's in 1927, was now a Pastor

23. Rockett Letter.

24. *Ibid.*

25. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 59-61, 63, 70-80, 84. *CBII*. Rockett Letter.

without a church or Professor without a college. Professor Hemmeyer's situation was similarly discouraging, as there now was an abundance of Lutheran pastors in the area.²⁶

At a called congregational meeting, St. John's resolved to send a formal letter of protest against the Board of Directors of Synod for their unkind treatment of the Professors in Conover. It proved to little avail.²⁷

During the summer of 1936, Pastor Rockett received a Call from the Mount Olive congregation, whose pulpit was vacant due to death of Rev. Long. After deliberation, St. John's unanimously requested that he return it. Mt. Olive issued a second Call to Professor Lindemeyer, which was accepted, and thus Lindemeyer gained employment locally. Finally, Professor Hemmeyer, whose financial support had been terminated, accepted a Call to a small mission in Maryland. Two or three trucks were loaded with his family's belongings, including "his white lightning which the Sheriff gave him," and they departed north. But before they were unloaded, Hemmeyer received word of a Call to the Seminary in Springfield, Ohio. The trucks then veered towards their new destination in the midwest.²⁸

Congregational activities flourished during this period, as frequency of holy communion was increased to six times per year in 1938. In July of 1939, St. John's was host to the joint Sunday School Association celebration.²⁹

But by the early 1930's, there were justifiable concerns within the local pastors' conference that this geographical area was being slighted by the Missouri Synod and its English District. The background issues involved the transition from German to English in this country, the growth of the District, the role of Concordia College within the synodical framework, and future mission work in the Southeast.

A brief discussion of how the English District gained and then lost favor in the Catawba County area takes readers back to the turn of the century. The old English Synod, which had been twice spurned by the Missouri Synod, was finally accepted as the English District of the Missouri Synod in 1911. The first point in the Article of Agreement is as follows:

*Resolved, That we regard it as most expedient and as most salutary for both parties to this union if individual congregations of the English Synod join the respective District of our Synod and that we entertain the hope that this end may be reached in the very near future.*³⁰

The original understanding during the merger was that the new English District be responsive to the English needs and the mission work of English-speaking sectors. Encouraged by the false insinuations that the German Lutherans sided with the enemy during World War I, many speakers of the German language felt uncomfortable with the tradition, and the English language swept into the Missouri Synod with a fury. Whereas all the other synodical districts were geographical in boundary, the English District was based on the spread of the English language within Missouri Synod congregations. On nearly a yearly basis, congregations asked to be released to other Districts, creating a curious swing of influence from the German-based Synod to its English District.³¹

During the merger, English-speaking Concordia College was removed from the control of the now-named English District, and was placed under the Missouri Synod. There were pros and cons to this alignment. The Synod accepted the responsibility of maintenance and payment of professors' salaries, which was welcome relief to the English District's struggles for capital. But about the same time, the Missouri Synod was beginning to provide English at its other institutions at Bronxville, Fort Wayne, Winfield, and perhaps other locations. The evolution of these other colleges to English did little to promote an increase in attendance or influence at the institution in Conover, as those from the north and midwest were prone to educate their English youth closer to home.³²

26. Rockett Letter. *Smith Autobiography*.

27. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 65.

28. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 69. Rockett Letter.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 88, 97.

30. *Proceedings of the Fourteenth Convention of the English District of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, Held at River Forest, Ill., June 20-23, 1933*, (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis: 1933), p. 80.

31. Conversation with Fred Rockett by Mark Smith. Other insight was derived from several articles in *The Lutheran Witness* during the era.

32. H. P. Eckhardt, "Our Synod and Its Treasury," *TLW*, Vol. XXX, No. 21, 12 Oct. 1911, p. 163.

Many in the Synod believed "southern people were poor and backward," and the co-educational Concordia College was "radically contrary to the established policy of Synod." The talk before the Synod consisted of negative phrases such as "white elephant," "unimportant institution," and "throwing good money after bad." Concordia College professors entered the 1911 Missouri Synod Meeting "with fear and trembling as to what some of the disgusted brethren might do."³³

These fears proved well founded, when "Synod was maneuvered into the unfortunate act" of appointing a committee of five "to go to Conover, as soon as possible, and, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, to fix the status of the school and to devise a plan for carrying on the work."³⁴ The report from this committee did not bode well for Concordia College:

The Committee of Synod, composed of the Vice-President of the General Synod: the Rev. J. W. Miller, two members of the Board of Supervisors: the Rev. C. F. Obermeyer and Mr. B. Bosse, and the Reverends William Dallmann and H. B. Hemmter, has met with the Board of Trustees of Concordia College and fixed the curriculum of the school. The Classical Course for ministerial students is not to be carried beyond Freshman (Quarta). Students in this Course are to complete their preparation for the Theological Seminary at some other college. The other Courses are to be complete and are to be determined by the local needs and the time that can be devoted to them by the teachers. The Faculty is to consist of four men who are, as far as possible, to be active in mission work.³⁵

Local pastors believed that the committee "announced what had been decided already before this meeting took place." In essence, Concordia College was reduced to the status of a high school, and those scholars wishing higher education were encouraged to attend an out-of-state institution. Rev. C. O. Smith, then pastor at Bethel, St. Paul's-Alexander, and Salem-Alexander, was hired to fill the vacancy of Professor George Luecke. Soon, there was another vacancy to fill, as by December, Reverend, President, Professor G. A. Romoser, who had been faithful to the college for nineteen years, accepted a Call to a congregation in Cleveland, Ohio. This left Professors Weiss, Haentzschel, and Smith. Prof. C. A. Weiss became acting President, but only remained until completion of the Spring term of 1913, when he accepted a Call to a congregation in Illinois. The primary motivations of the new Concordia College was as a preparatory school for the ministry, and a central location for mission work. When George A. Romoser departed, so did the Editor-in-Chief of *The Lutheran Witness*. When Weiss left, so did its last editor from Conover. Concordia College was not as important to the Missouri Synod as it had been to the former English Synod, and the local Lutherans felt betrayed.³⁶

In 1915, the movement for a Southeastern District was contemplated. The St. John's congregation resolved that an application be submitted to the English District for a separate and distinct Southeastern District.³⁷ Although a new district was not formed, the Southeastern Mission Board was organized and incorporated within the state of North Carolina soon thereafter, and efforts were taken to secure missionaries. By 1916, after C. O. Smith and George E. Long had returned Calls for a missionary position, Concordia College President H. B. Hemmter accepted the duties. He soon took an extended trip to Florida and back, to investigate the possibilities of mission endeavors in these areas. When he returned, he described a field in need of cultivation, and the remainder of the Concordia Professors went out "to do extensive exploring." Professors continued the mission efforts.³⁸

By 1922, the Missouri Synod was again considering the closing of Concordia College. At its December conference, the area pastors and delegates reiterated its importance:

This college has always played a very important part in the work of our Lutheran Zion in this field. The majority of the pastors and professors, members of our conference, are graduates of the institution. The result of the deliberations was that all the members realize

33. *Smith Autobiography*.

34. "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XXX, No. 12, 8 June 1911, p.94. *Smith Autobiography*.

35. G. A. Romoser, "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XXX, No. 16, 3 Aug. 1911, p. 125.

36. Ad. Haentzschel, "At Home," *TLW*, Vol. XXX, No. 26, 21 Dec 1911, p. 206. "New Editorial Staff of 'Witness,'" *TLW*, Vol.

XXXI, No. 7, 28 Mar 1912, p. 53. "At Home," Vol. XXXII, No. 16, 31 Jul 1913, p. 126. *Smith Autobiography*.

37. *Church Minute Book I*, p. 158.

38. M. J. Heinicke, "Southeastern Letter," *TLW*, Vol. XXXIV, No. 24, 30 Nov 1915, p. 378; Vol. XXXV, No. 3, 8 February 1916, p. 39; Vol. XXXV, No. 5, 7 March 1916, p. 73; and Vol. XXXV, No. 20, 3 October, 1916, p. 310.

the importance of the college for the pursuance of our congregational and mission-work, and they were mutually urged to renewed zeal in behalf of the institution.³⁹

At the following year's Missouri Synod convention, it was reported that a new "professor's house," designed by Hickory architect Q. A. Herman, was nearly completed under the direction of the Conover contractor, Benfield and Herman. The matter of closing was left in the hands of the Board of Directors, with a report to follow three years later. When the College requested \$5,000 for its building program, it was not endorsed by the Synod's finance committee.⁴⁰ Concordia College was falling into disfavor because it did not produce many young men with vision towards the ministry, and in its 1923 announcement, Concordia emphasized that purpose. At the next Southeastern Conference meeting, this problem was confronted:

Realizing Synod's primary purpose of establishing and maintaining its educational institutions, educating boys for the ministry, the members of Conference purpose to continue earnest efforts to increase the number of ministerial students in our college. Our hopes and prayers are that the Lord will crown our efforts with success, so that our Concordia may continue in the Southeast and furnish more boys for the ministry than she has done in the past.⁴¹

But the men of the Southeastern Conference were not easily deterred, as they approached the English District for funds for a new lecture hall and small dormitory in 1926. The laymen pledged to purchase four or five acres adjoining the college to provide the space for these buildings. When these requests reached the floor of the Missouri Synod at its triennial convention, there was much opposition and the debates, in which speakers were limited to two minutes, were vigorous. "Oratory flowed, yet not to the detriment of the convention business. High spots were the appeals of Dr. Dallmann and President Kreinheder for Conover's new building. . . ." The results were disappointing, as Synod postponed the proposed dormitory project, but appropriated \$1,200 for the installation of municipal water to the campus. A resolution followed that the Synod appropriate \$95,000 for an Administration Building; yet when the committee on institutions presented its recommendations, not a word about the Administration Building was contained therein. Eventually, this money was pledged, but was not to come forth until it accrued to the synodical treasury.⁴²

The fall enrollment at Concordia totaled sixty-one students, with twenty-four listed in the ministerial department. This represented quite an improvement towards the goals of the Synod. But the college also experienced two losses at the end of the first term of 1927-1928 — Professor of Sciences and Mathematics, Martin H. Coyner, to the Seminary, and President O. W. Kreinheder to the active ministry. The staff consisted of acting-President C. O. Smith, Professor C. F. Fredericks, Instructor G. E. Mennen, and pitch-in assistance from local Pastors W. Alex Setzer, F. Freed, Walter P. Hunsucker, and George E. Long. The arrival of Rev. O. W. H. Lindemeyer in April of 1928 helped relieve the staff shortage.⁴³

During the period when local Lutherans were struggling with the Missouri Synod over Concordia College, language and resultant organizational issues re-surfaced. In 1923, upon request by one district for amalgamation of the English District into the several geographical boundaries of the other Districts, the Synod agreed to the following:

39. George E. Mennen, "Southeastern Conference Meets," *TLW*, Vol. XLII, No. 3, 30 January 1923, p. 38.

40. "Our Colleges and Seminaries," "The Convention Day By Day," and "Building Program," *TLW*, Vol. XLII, No. 14, 3 July 1923, pp. 209, 220. "Triennium's Building Program, 1923-1926," *TLW*, Vol. XLV, No. 12, 15 June 1926, p. 197.

41. "Announcements Regarding Our Synodical Institutions," *TLW*, Vol. XLII, No. 16, 31 July 1923, p. 254. George E. Mennen, "News from the Southeast," *TLW*, Vol. XLII, No. 20, 25 September 1923, p. 313.

42. "Our Seminaries and Colleges," *TLW*, Vol. XLV, No. 12, 15 June 1926, p. 190. "The Convention Day by Day," *TLW*, Vol. XLV, No. 13, 29 June 1926, pp. 209-221. *The Concordian*, June 1928, p. 11.

43. Several Announcements, *TLW*, Vol. XLVI, No. 20, 4 October 1927, p.331; Vol. XLVI, No. 22, 1 November 1927, p.375; Vol. XLVI, No. 23, 15 November 1927, p.402. *The Concordian*, 1928, pp. 11, 19.

Since all Districts of Synod are becoming more and more English in their work, we do not deem it wise to reject said memorial (which had petitioned for amalgamation) outright, but believe the proposal should come from the English District and therefore ask it kindly to discuss this matter.⁴⁴

The English District did not accede to the request at this time. In 1932, the Missouri Synod resolved

that a committee be appointed to draw up reasons for an amalgamation and to take up this question with the English District and therefore ask it kindly to discuss this matter.⁴⁵

A synodical committee was appointed, and earnestly requested that the English District dissolve and amalgamate its churches with the other districts of the Synod. Its proposal was that the English District state the conditions that it deemed necessary for amalgamation, considering the language differences that existed in certain geographical areas. These would be submitted to each of the other districts for their individual considerations.⁴⁶

The English District appointed a committee, and it deliberated on the "many and perplexing" issues. It felt that "the time for such action had not yet arrived," and resolved that dissolution of the English District was premature, and that they would inform Synod when "the time for such action has arrived."⁴⁷

Meanwhile, certain areas within the English District's own ranks had become dissatisfied due to inconvenience and perceived inattention to their needs. The churches in the Southeastern Conference were displeased with the increasing geography encompassed by the English District. Typically, its meetings were held in a midwestern state, causing additional expenses for congregations in the peripheral areas of the district. The Southeastern Conference submitted a Petition to break from the English District and form a new district. The primary reason was that the English District's mission work in the Southeast had not received "the attention that it requires and so clearly deserves." Although the relationship with the English District had been positive, home missions were felt better maintained at home. This letter was signed by Pastors H. F. Meyer, J. L. Summers, George E. Mennen, and H. B. Hemmeter -- with Summers, Mennen, and Hemmeter being from Catawba County, North Carolina.⁴⁸

A second petition was submitted from several congregations. Due to the location of these churches, it is presented in its entirety:

WHEREAS, The remoteness of our Missouri Lutheran congregations in North and South Carolina in most cases prevents congregational representation at the District meetings of our English District on account of the heavy financial expense; and

WHEREAS, The development of the missionary opportunities in our section of the country calls for a more concerted cooperation also on the part of our local congregations; and

WHEREAS, The purposes of the congregations of the Southeastern Field as well as the general purpose could be more effectively and satisfactorily served by a local District of Synod; therefore

THE UNDERSIGNED CONGREGATIONS OF NORTH AND SOUTH CAROLINA

Request the English District kindly to grant its consent to the formation of a separate District for the Southern territory, comprising for the first the States of North and South Carolina; and Petition the Synod in session in 1935 to authorize the creating and establishing of such a District.

Respectfully submitted:--

(Signed:) First Lutheran Church, Asheville, N. C.

H. F. Meyer, Pastor; G. M. Moser, President.

St. Stephen's Church, Hickory, N. C.

J. L. Summers, Pastor; G. R. Herman, Secretary.

44. *Proceedings, 1933*, p. 80.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 79-81.

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 74.

Ebenezer Church, Greensboro, N. C.
 R. E. Scaer, Pastor; W. M. Polk, Secretary.
 Mount Calvary Church, Charlotte, N. C.
 L. F. Frerking, Pastor; E. Q. Stroupe, Secretary.
 Concordia Church, Conover, N. C.
 G. E. Mennen, Pastor; J. A. Isenhower, President.
 St. John's Church, Conover, N. C.
 F. W. Rockett, Pastor; D. F. Smith, Secretary.
 Salem and St. Paul's Churches, Taylorsville, N. C.
 R. E. Mennen, Pastor; H. Burke, Secretary.
 Christ Church, Hickory, N. C.
 F. A. Freed, Pastor.
 Bethel Church, Claremont, N. C.
 W. P. Hunsucker, Pastor; John Hoke, Secretary.
 St. Peter's Church, Conover, N.C.
 W. P. Hunsucker, Pastor; L. L. Hoke, Secretary.⁴⁹

Fully six of the eleven congregations were from Catawba County and another two were from Alexander. The Committee "recommended that this petition be granted and that the English District wish these brethren the richest blessings of Almighty God." The recommendation was adopted by the District.⁵⁰

However in 1935, "The Missouri Synod rejected the petition," but added the amendment "that the brethren of the Southeastern Conference confer with the brethren of the neighboring Districts in order to bring about, if at all possible, the formation of the New District."⁵¹

The North Carolina proposition of 1933 for a new district was followed by a similar move by the Eastern Pastoral Conference in 1936, for many of the same reasons. They also proposed that the District prorate traveling expenses among all the Churches in order to provide equitable availability to attend District Meetings.

It is often impossible for the congregations more distant from the meeting-place of District synod to send delegates to synod because of financial considerations; . . . The present system of giving financial aid for traveling expenses to pastors and lay delegates has often proved inadequate, unsatisfactory, and humiliating; . . . The lack of representation on the part of a considerable number of congregations is detrimental to the work of our beloved District and might lead to its dissolution. . . . Henry C. Hemmeter, Secretary.⁵²

The movement towards formation of a new district was fueled by the Concordia College fire of April 16, 1935. When the Synod's later decision reached Conover, it was "to the sorrow and painful regret of many of her faithful," as they believed that "Synod made a serious mistake when it killed her." As higher education in Conover was reduced to ash, so were the missionary efforts in the Southeast, as the professors soon did not have the freedoms or financial assistance to provide much mission work.⁵³

On November 17, 1936, movements for realignment continued with a meeting between the Southern, Western, and English Districts, where the possibilities of a Southeastern District were explored further. At this meeting, the proposed new district expanded to include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Tennessee, as well as North and South Carolina. Several area pastors were present at this meeting, as were pastors from South Carolina, Tennessee, and Alabama. No decisive action was taken.⁵⁴

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75. Memorial was approved by congregation on May 29, 1932, per *Church Minute Book II*, p. 37.

50. *Proceedings, 1933*, p. 75.

51. *Reports and Overtures, Organization Convention of the New District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, Conover, North Carolina, July 24 to 28, 1939*, no publ. listed, p. 3, cited from "Proceedings, 1935", pp. 202-204.

52. *Reports to be submitted to the Sixteenth Convention of the English District of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, to be held at River Forest, Ill., June 16 to 20, 1936*, (Concordia, St. Louis: 1936), p. 32.

53. *Smith Autobiography*.

54. *Reports to be submitted to the Seventeenth Convention of the English District of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, to be held at River Forest, Ill., June 15 to 18, 1937*, (Concordia, St. Louis: 1937), p. 7. *Reports and Overtures, 1939*, p. 3.

On July 14, 1937, there was a meeting at Conover, consisting of thirty-nine representatives from the Baltimore Pastoral Conference, and the Eastern, English, Southern, and Western Districts, along with the local pastors. The Board of Home Missions was requested to appoint a Steering Committee to investigate the possibilities of a new District.⁵⁵

The Steering Committee then met on October 6-7, 1937, in Richmond. Guidelines were adopted to measure the advisability of the new district. These included a study of the missionary opportunities in the region, re-examination of certain locales if necessary, and "if conditions warrant it, to take the necessary steps for the organization of the proposed new District." The Committee also approved of the requests that the Philadelphia area be included in the new district due to its close cooperation with the Baltimore area. Conversely, the western Tennessee region requested to remain in the Western District. Lay delegates were then appointed to the Steering Committee, including Mr. J. A. Isenhower of Conover and Mr. D. F. Cline of Hickory.⁵⁶

A second Committee meeting was held in Richmond on May 3, 1938. After the promising reports came forth about the "wonderful prospects to advance the cause of our Savior in the Carolinas," the Committee was unanimously in favor of the new District. The idea was then presented to pastors' conferences, joint parishes, and individual congregations. By the time the canvas was completed, 46 pastors and 57 congregations "resolved to petition Synod to authorize the formation of the new district."⁵⁷

At the 1938 Missouri Synod meeting, these proposals and petitions were presented. A review Committee was appointed, which heartily endorsed the proposals pending release of the various pastors and congregations from their present districts.⁵⁸

Richmond hosted a third meeting on September 7-8, when Rev. C. O. Smith was appointed to the Committee upon request of the pastors of the Southeastern Conference. The Philadelphia and Eastern Tennessee congregations opted to be excluded from the proposed new district, and their pastors were dropped from the Committee. To expedite the transition, the congregations were requested to "authorize the Commission to make all plans necessary for the organization of the new District." This Commission proceeded to generate proposed organizational criteria, a review of the mission field, and a number of other reports and observations.⁵⁹

St. John's voted to withdraw from the English District at a called congregational meeting on January 29, 1939. This resolution was signed by A. C. Yount, H. G. Baker, and Pastor Fred Rockett. At the Eighteenth English District Meeting of 1939, F. A. Freed, C. O. Smith, G. E. Mennen, F. W. Rockett, W. P. Hunsucker, J. L. Summers, O. W. Lindemeyer, and R. E. Mennen, all of Catawba or Alexander County, requested transfers to establish the new Southeastern District, and the English Synod recommended that this occur on the date of the organization of the new District. The total number of congregations transferred were 32, with 10 in Catawba County and 2 in Alexander 60

A complimentary memorial came forth from the English District at this meeting:

NEW DISTRICT IN THE SOUTHEAST

Twice our District has voted its consent to the formation of a new synodical District in the Southeast, and in 1938 Synod itself authorized the establishment of this new District, which is to be consummated next month (July 24-28). This Southeastern area has been peculiarly the field of our own English District. We must never forget, on the one hand, the contribution made by the men of the old Tennessee Synod to the development of English work in the Missouri Synod, nor, on the other hand, the indoctrinating and evangelizing influence that radiated from the Conover Concordia after we took it over. Let us rejoice and thank God that no spirit of "secession" (like that of 1861 in the Republic) but rather a spirit of missionary enterprise has prompted the formation of a separate District. In faith and practise [*sic*] we remain one.⁶¹

55. *Reports and Overtures*, 1939, p. 3.

56. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

59. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

60. *Proceedings of the Eighteenth Convention of the English District of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, Held at River Forest, Ill., June 20 to 23, 1939*, (Concordia, St. Louis: 1939), pp. 46-47.

61. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

The First Convention of the Southeastern District of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States was held at Concordia Church, Conover, North Carolina, from July 24 to 28, 1939. This was a joint sponsorship between Concordia and "her sister Congregations in Catawba County, N. C.."62

The arrangements for this special event were many, and nearly everyone was involved. Delegates were hosted at the homes of area members, and were provided with home-cooked, Catawba County breakfasts. An automobile pool was assembled to provide transportation for pastors and delegates. A banquet and "Social Evening" was held at Legion Hall in Newton on Wednesday night, with all transportation provided (price per plate, \$1.00). The Walther Leagues (particularly that of Concordia) provided a Post Office, and assured that all mail was "promptly dispatched." If you needed "refreshments, cold drinks, smokes, etc.," you were referred to the Walther League Booth. If you needed "Laundry and Pressing Service," go to the Walther League Booth. Few details were left unattended.63

Delegates at this meeting from the St. John's/Immanuel parish were Pastor Rockett, P. M. Dellinger, and former Pastor of Immanuel, S. S. Keisler. After a welcome address by John A. Isenhower of Concordia Congregation, this convention also showcased sermons by several pastors. Devotions were presented by Dr. Henry Graeber, Rev. G. E. Mennen, Rev. E. Pieplow, and Rev. F. A. Freed. Many theses and dissertations were presented during this week, with the emphasis being the southeastern mission field. On Wednesday afternoon, the assembly moved to St. Stephen's Church, where Divine Services and Holy Communion were observed, with J. L. Summers, O. W. Kreinheder, and Rev. J. Frederic Wenchel officiating. The services, discussions, committee meetings, and general sessions concluded on Friday.64

Soon after the formation of the Southeastern District, a congregation from South Carolina attempted to lure Pastor Rockett away. St. John's unanimously encouraged Rockett to return the Call but realized that the financial offer was a temptation. After deliberation, the pastor's salary was increased by \$150.00 to \$1050.00 per year. When this offer was communicated, Pastor Rockett reflected that he would give it "his deepest consideration." He again elected to continue serving "the church of his fathers."65

It was Good Friday, March 22, 1940. Pastor Rockett had borrowed his father's car, and was en route from Conover to St. John's with his five year old daughter in the back seat. Cars of the 1930's had rear doors which hinged either on the front or the back, and therefore, opened in opposite directions. The latch and locking device handles also operated in reverse manner. Rear doors on Rockett's personal automobile were hinged on front, and his father's, on the rear. When Cornelia Ruth Rockett, attempted to lock her car door, she did so in her customary manner, and disengaged the latch of her grandfather's rear door. The gusty wind caught the door like a sail, opened it with tremendous force, and the little girl was pulled to her untimely death. It was like each family at St. John's had lost a child of its own. The congregation mourned and underwrote the entire funeral expenses. Pastor Rockett fondly reminisced, "What a caring bunch of people. Little wonder that after all these years, I keep them in my prayers every night."66

During the following few years, the congregation undertook several projects, including improvements in the parking lot. Glenn Smith volunteered to loan his truck and one "hand," and R. L. Rockett offered the sand. The work was performed by the membership. During this period, the congregation adopted new hymnals. Constitutional revisions included that Council members must be over 21 years of age, the treasurer became a member of Council, congregational meetings were to be held monthly, and new rules were effected for baptisms and transfers of membership.67

An exceptional budget from the post-depression era is seen in 1941:68

62. *Program of the Organization Convention of the New District, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States, July 24-28, 1939, Concordia Lutheran Church, Conover, North Carolina*, no publ. listed, no page numbers.

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Proceedings of the First Convention of the Southeastern District of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, Held at Conover, N. C., July 24-28, 1939*, (Concordia, St. Louis: 1939), pp. 4-5. The minutes incorrectly list the St. John's delegate as "F." M. Dellinger.

65. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 100, 107-108.

66. Rockett Letter.

67. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 102, 107-112.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 115. Pastors salary is not included as it was taken from a separate fund.

Collections for 1941:

Amount brought forward Jan 1, 1941	\$ 152.41
Collections for hymnals	\$ 59.50
Collections for Lord's Acre	\$ 485.25
Collections for Bible Camp	\$1974.15
Collections for Home	\$1231.33
Collections for Army and Navy	\$ 57.15
Collections for Synod	\$ 314.47
John Heffner for use of lights	<u>\$ 1.00</u>
	TOTAL
	\$4275.26

Current Expenses for 1941:

Paid for fertilizer for church property	\$ 4.00
Paid for envelopes	\$ 12.38
Work on parsonage furnace	\$ 134.03
Paid janitor	\$ 13.00
Paid for paint	\$ 11.14
Labor for painting	\$ 18.50
Paid organist	\$ 25.00
Sent Synod	\$ 371.62
Paid Camp	\$2000.00
Amount in Building & Loan	<u>\$ 500.00</u>
	TOTAL
	\$4139.97

The congregation was operating in the "black," and had been able to save for the future. The major item of expenditure was "Camp." In 1926, members from St. John's had been appointed to go to Marion to check out property for the Southeastern Conference. This property was not purchased at that time. The renewal of this idea was the brain-child of Pastors Rockett and James E. Summers of St. Stephen's in 1930, when they attended a Seminar on Walther League Camping in Arcadia, Michigan. A "camp" charter for the North Carolina District of the Walther League was then obtained. The first Walther League Camp in the Southeast was established at Black Mountain that August, and Pastor James L. Summers served as Dean, and Rockett, as Director and Manager, for a decade. The movement grew in popularity until in 1941, when twenty acres of land and three buildings became available near Linville. After some preliminary negotiations, and a matching offer from a generous benefactor, about \$3,000 had been conditionally raised. Area pastors then approached their congregations for additional support in raising the money. As nobody wished to see \$3,000 floating down the Linville River, financial support from the area congregations came forth, and Camp Linn-Haven became a reality. At the time of this writing, this scenic valley near Grandfather Mountain has served as the environment for Christian development and wholesome family recreation for over five decades, and many fondly remember those cool summer nights and frigid water in the pool.⁶⁹

A second item of notice in the above Budget was the "Collection for Army and Navy." This would soon become a series of special collections for this purpose, as by 1941, "wars and rumors of wars" were again affecting this country, and young men were being drafted and enlisting into the military. In July, Coyte Hunsucker resigned his office as Sunday School Treasurer to serve his country. When his replacement, J. M. Bondurant resigned a

69. Rockett Letter. Augmented by conversation with Mark Smith in October 1994. *Church Minute Book II*, 4, contains the curious 1926 movement by St. John's.

year later, Vance Hollar was elected to fill his term. A month later, Hollar resigned, and it was left up to the Sunday School Superintendent to select his own treasurer.⁷⁰

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor (where Coyte Hunsucker was stationed), and the United States soon found itself fully immersed in the conflict. Another bomb dropped into St. John's as a result. Like Pastor Mennen, in August of 1942, Pastor Rockett received a Call to serve as Chaplain in the military. He was somewhat reluctant to accept it, as his young family had recently been blessed by the birth of twins. That same day, Pastor Roswell Mennen was visiting the area. George Mennen's son was then serving Grace Mission in High Point. He stopped in to see Pastor Rockett and they discussed the Army Chaplain position. A month later, Roswell Mennen, and not Fred Rockett, was in uniform. In October, the same Grace Church issued a Call to Pastor Rockett. As Mennen had taken the same Chaplain position to which Rockett was called, Rockett felt obliged to replace his friend Roswell's old position at the High Point Mission. As he loved the people and families at St. John's, this became "the toughest decision" Rockett ever had to make. He accepted the Call, received a unanimous but regretful release from the congregation, and delivered his farewell sermon in November. A cordial resolution in appreciation of Rockett's service was sent to the High Point congregation by committee of C. D. Sigman and P. M. Dellinger.⁷¹

Pastor Walter Hunsucker from Bethel assisted the congregation in making its Calls and supplied the pulpit on occasion. Unsuccessful Calls went forth to Richard Lineberger in November, Rev. Gerhardt in December, Pastor R. Scaer in January of 1943, and Pastor Hunsucker in February. Finally, on February 28, the Call went to Pastor Roland Hasse of Indian Head, Maryland. The native from Dexter, Minnesota accepted, and was installed at St. John's on April 18. After preaching his first sermon the next week at Immanuel, the 1929 graduate from Concordia College commenced his service to St. John's on May 2, 1943, where he preached a sermon suitable for the stormy political times, entitled "Our great and abiding peace."⁷²

As many of her members were being called into national service, the congregation continued with its ministry and church activities. Many attended the retirement service of former pastor George Mennen at Concordia on January 9, 1944. Joint Easter Sunrise services and Reformation services were held, alternating between the St. John's and Immanuel. In May, the Walther League, depleted by loss of many of its older members, hosted a convention for its sister Leagues from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. As usual, this included a Saturday night banquet, and a picnic "on the grounds" on Sunday. Reverend Thomas Cortes, of the Walther League Office in Chicago, was guest speaker at the banquet and at the Church services the next morning. Pastor Fredericks also visited the area this year, and assisted in a communion service.⁷³

The home front was not without perils of its own, as the polio epidemic swept through the country and local community. Children's attendance at Sunday School was suspended from June 11th through the first Sunday in September of 1944. A special radio Sunday School program was instituted by the Layman's League, so that the children could receive these instructions at home. Special polio camps were set up in Hickory and at other locations, and strict local health regulations were adopted. The severity of this disease was made vivid, when James Elliot and Glenn Sigmon of Immanuel became victims. Elliot was hospitalized in Charlotte, and his slow progress was monitored by the congregation. Donations were made to the polio fund, and it was resolved to send the food from that year's Harvest Home service to the polio camp in Hickory, where Glenn Sigmon was a patient; however, health restrictions prevented acceptance of the food, and it was directed to another needy cause. Sigmon was released by the end of 1944. Elliot was released for short periods but returned to Charlotte for additional treatments for several years. In 1946, Wilena Baker, daughter of Leonard Baker, contracted the dread disease. In 1948, the Health Advisory issued a notice that the congregation consider the curtailment of Sunday School under the epidemic conditions. Vacation Bible School was indefinitely postponed. Sunday School was greatly hampered, and confirmation classes were postponed until the Health Department felt conditions warranted resumption. The

70. *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109, 116, 118.

71. *Ibid.*, pp. 119, 127-128. Rockett Letter.

72. *CBII. Church Minute Book II*, 119-122. *Walter P. Hunsucker Journal*, pp. 198, 202. *The Carillon*, 1929, p. 9.

73. *Church Bulletins, 1944-1947*, St. John's Lutheran Church, hereinafter referenced *Haase*. Nearly every bulletin from the Haase era was saved in booklet form by year. *CBII*.

disease surfaced occasionally in the congregation through the mid-1950's and its resultant crippling effects were living reminders to the congregation for decades.⁷⁴

With the dread epidemic at home in 1944, the war was now of greatest concern to the congregation, as one by one, its young men and one young woman entered the armed services. Camp Linn Haven was closed for the year due to war conditions and polio. Special collections continued, special prayer services were held, and special efforts were made through bulletins and newsletters to keep the membership informed as to the status of all servicemen. Nancy Rae Perkins, Irene Baker, and Wayne Smith announced their intention to print a monthly Walther League newsletter. By the end of the year, the first installment of "The Question Mark" was published and distributed -- obviously searching for a more appropriate name, which later became "League Nuggets." This newsletter was continued for about two years, and later came under the editorship of Marilyn Rockett and Lorene Baker, with Jack Smith as printer. It included typical local teenage gossip (such as who was seen out with whom, and where), plus the latest news about those in the military, and provided considerable information amid some comic relief to those in the armed forces. But it also reminded those in service that they were constantly in the prayers of the congregation.⁷⁵

As the Walther League Publication reached the hands of the servicemen, the responses began to return. Q. E. Simmons sympathized with the plight on the mainland, "I am glad to hear that the league is still getting along so well. I know it is greatly handicapped from lack of boys." Fred Hollar, who was in Florida, "also thinks that the St. John's girls have a 'tough-time' without him!"⁷⁶

The congregation hung a special service flag in the sanctuary. Each time a member entered service, an ensignia was attached. When a member was discharged, an appropriate emblem was placed over it. Should one die in service to his country, a gold star was to be installed. By 1943 and 1944, the number of names on the service flag was always over fifteen. Reports came back that Clyde Yount had been injured by the Nazis, and the congregation shuddered at the thought of what else might lay ahead. Baxter Yount underwent surgery state-side and was hospitalized for over fifty days. Other minor hospitalizations were reported. As the war peaked in 1945, even more men were called to service, and the make-up of the congregation became largely middle-age and older men, with women, children, and youth. With several members continuously on both the European and Pacific fronts, the congregation waited with trepidation to the day it would arrive at Church to see a gold star on the flag.⁷⁷

Special services were planned as early as 1944 for the war's end. When surrender was formally announced on either front, Thanksgiving Services were to be conducted the next evening at 8:00. Which would occur first? The gold stars or the Thanksgiving Services?

In April 1945, Lutheran and American flags were placed into service of the Church, as donated by Mr. and Mrs. Berman E. Smith. During the following week, the members had the opportunity to reflect on them, as President Franklin Delano Roosevelt succumbed to complications caused by polio. Prayers went forth for the new president and for an end to the cruel war. Area citizens also trembled at the thoughts of destruction, when about twenty-five war planes roared over the Catawba Valley. Thanks to God were offered that they were our airplanes.⁷⁸

One of the St. John's servicemen carried his Lutheran message into the military, and was duly lauded by both the congregation and the Synod. Berman Smith was stationed at South Hampton Island off of the mainland of Canada -- one of the coldest outposts imaginable. The base did not have a Protestant Chaplain, so Berman organized a Bible Class for Sunday mornings, and the attendance grew to 14 or 15. On Easter Sunday, he delivered a "sermon for the boys." The congregation was proud of one of its sons, and encouraged him accordingly: "That is good Lutheranism -- but above all Good Christianity!"⁷⁹

74. *Ibid.* Sunday School Ledger, 1944, St. Johns Lutheran Church. CBII.

75. *Haase.*

76. *Ibid.*

77. *Ibid.*

78. *Ibid.*

79. *Ibid.*

In May 1945, word of the surrender in Europe reached the vigil radio listeners, and the good news spread quickly. At the following night's services, the hymns were "Now Thank We All Our God" and "God Bless Our Native Land," and a most fitting sermon was delivered. The report to the servicemen was as follows:

You may all be interested in how the news of the end of the war was received here at home. Well, here in Conover it was received rather calmly. We had one false report - after that we expected to receive the real news at any moment - so, when it really came, we were all thrilled - we felt very happy about it, but there was no rowdy behavior. People here at home knew that there was still a very big job to do. BUT - and that is important, our people were thankful - they came to church - Here, we had V-E day services in all our churches. I have spoken to several of our pastors in this neighborhood and they all reported that their churches were filled. So, you see - your people here at home were praying for you - praying for you as we do in our church services - and as we do so often on other occasions. The Lord is hearing our prayers in your behalf. May He hasten the day of final victory. But while we anxiously wait for that, we will continue to pray for you - do you all pray for us! We need your prayers too, you know.⁸⁰

As much action was reported on the Pacific front, the congregation began its anticipation. In early September, Q. E. Simmons reported that "he was working on japs a plenty," and verily he and his associates must have been. For in September 1945, the good news of the Japanese surrender finally was published, and a sigh of thankful relief was felt by the entire country.

The war is over! The treaty was signed! For this we are thankful. Some of our boys have gone and some have come back. We have no deaths as a result of the conflict. Now thank we all our God.⁸¹
NO GOLD STARS!!!

The following St. John's members and close friends participated in World War II, or the surrender enforcement actions immediately thereafter. Each one had the word "**DISCHARGED**" placed on the service flag in his or her honor.⁸²

Joe M. Bondurant
Leslie R. Brady
Ernest Bumgarner ?
Ralph L. Cline ?
Adrian Herman
Kenneth Joe Herman
Richard C. Herman
Fred Hollar
G. E. Hollar
Roy Hollar
Vance Hollar
Bill Hunsucker
Coyte Hunsucker
Dewey Hunsucker
Hal Hunsucker
Joe T. Johnson
Harold Rader
Detleve Sigmon
Ray E. Sigmon
Clifford Simmons
Ervin Simmons
Q. E. Simmons

⁸⁰. *Ibid.*

⁸¹. *Ibid.*

⁸². *Ibid.* It is unclear why Mark had question marks beside two entries. RCC

Berman Smith
Darvin Smith
Herman Smith
Merritt Smith
Baxter Yount
Clyde Yount
Everett Yount
Lawrence A. Yount
Katherine Yount

In 1945, discharges began to come rapidly, and the make-up of the membership resumed nearly normal proportions by about the middle of 1946.

Although through God's mercy, the lives of the servicemen were spared, the congregation mourned the losses of Martha Cloninger Brady (1943), Mrs. Vernon Roseman's mother (1944), Mr. Will Sigmon (1944), Mrs. Florence Hollar (1944), infant of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Goble (1944), infant of Mr. & Mrs. Russell Hefner (1944), Marvin Brady (1944), Mrs. Martin Huffman (1945), Joe Roseman (1945), and Vernon Roseman (1946). Word also reached the families of St. John's of the unexpected death of former member Wade Simmons due to burning in Winston-Salem (1944).⁸³

Two unexpected deaths of remaining Walther League members saddened the congregation immeasurably -- unrelated to the war effort in 1944. Jaster Smith, son of Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Smith, drowned at an outing at Taylorsville Beach one week before he was to graduate from high school in May. On September 10th, another teenager, Bettie Jean Yount, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Yount, died from cancer, after being sick for about a year.⁸⁴

In 1930, the Missouri Lutheran congregation owned half interest in church property, its nearly fifty-year-old, one-room brick Church, and a four acre parsonage lot without improvement. Through the many disruptions of the 1930's and 1940's -- the depression, economic upturn, the moving of a beloved Pastor, the temporary losses of about thirty members to the military, the interruptions in church routine due to polio, and the local deaths of many members and friends -- it had acquired or built many assets, including "the Hut," three-fourths interest in a parsonage in Conover, and its share as co-sponsor of Camp Linn Haven. It was always making improvements to the Church, and the foundation had been properly laid for a new "Church on the Hill."

But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. Psalms 86:15

83. *Ibid.*

84. *Ibid.* Conversations with the deceased's families.



Gauthier Yount, Sue Hewitt, and Grace Yount with
St. John's Bible School children in the early 1940's

A CHURCH OF OUR OWN

Now set your heart and your soul to seek the Lord your God; arise therefore, and build ye the sanctuary of the Lord God . . . 1 Chronicles 22:19.

With World War II in the hearts, minds, and prayers of the St. John's families, Church routine was moving with a vision to the future. Pastor Rockett recognized that it was just a matter of time before the membership would undertake a major re-construction project. If not under his leadership, hopefully it would occur soon thereafter.

The property was still held in joint ownership by three congregations. St. John's was still a "Union Church" over fifty years after the custom had died and was buried in most other Churches. Very few Union Churches remained in Catawba County, as others either dissolved the union by the common law legal concept of adverse possession, or the rights were purchased by one party or the other. This was not so at St. John's, as the minority congregations held fast to their legal property rights. Many instances have been cited when the Missouri Lutherans attempted to negotiate total ownership with the other two parties, but with limited success. The Reformed, who had met at Trinity in Conover for years, regularly agreed to rent their one Sunday per month, but steadfastly held one service per year to assure their ownership. The "swap" of one Sunday afternoon for use of the organ was as far as any "buy-out" with the American Lutheran (formerly Ohio) congregation ever had gotten.

The Church building, which had been built with soft, hand-made, brick, was in a state of rapid decay. The roof and cupola were sources of regular maintenance expenses. The building had become obsolete, without plumbing in an era when even smaller new houses had this luxury; without an electrical system to operate the new inventions of the twentieth century; and without a central heating system. But most importantly, it had become woefully inadequate to serve the needs of the congregation. The construction of the "hut" had helped alleviate the space needs, but 1,320 square feet could only be considered a temporary solution. The time had come to begin preparations for a new building, and the Lord's Acre program was adding a few dollars to the savings account each year. In 1942, Lord's Acre included the farming of the Church property, as \$24.03 was gained from the sale of the wheat grown there. For the year, Lord's Acre brought in \$535.21, and a year later it was included in the War Bond drive and garnered \$1,038.75.¹

But no positive action on construction of a new building could be considered until a clear property title was obtained. Although several feelers were sent out, nothing of importance materialized prior to 1940, when the congregation authorized the Church Council to negotiate with the Reformed congregation concerning their one-fourth interest. An offer was made to the Reformed consistory by September but was withdrawn in December. Again in October 1941, the subject re-appeared for discussion, but no further action was taken. These efforts were all made under Pastor Rockett.²

After Pastor Haase's arrival, a building committee of H. C. Cline, D. F. Smith and Jake Workman was organized, and a committee of Pastor Haase, Glenn Smith, P. M. Dellinger, and C. D. Sigman was appointed on March 5, 1944, to "investigate the buying of church property from other congregations." The following month, the voting members were asked to "study this matter and tell the committee in thirty days what to do," at which time they were reminded "to be ready to take some action." In May, a motion carried that the committee approach the Reformed congregation again, "and ask them if they will sell and at what price."³

Negotiations were going nowhere fast, as on June 4, 1944, Glenn Smith offered a tract of land for construction of a new church. The congregation gave Smith a rising vote of thanks, and was advised to give the matter "deep consideration." At a called meeting two weeks later, Smith's offer was turned down, again with the

1. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 117, 127-128, 133.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 103, 105.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 126, 135-137.

thanks of the congregation. A joint committee meeting was then set up, and discussions about the costs of the other two property shares ensued. The committee made a report in July, and was given authority to "act as they see fit in working out something with the other congregations." On September 3rd, a motion was passed to pay the American Lutheran Congregation \$1,500.00 plus the four acre parsonage lot nearby. Further deliberations at the next called meeting resulted in postponement of any action. On September 17, the announcement was made:

**THE MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CONGREGATION HAVE AGREED TO SELL US THEIR
PROPERTY RIGHTS--DETAILS LATER.4**

In October, a fund raising committee was appointed for property purchase. By November 12, 1944, one giant step towards a new church was completed, and Pastor Haase proudly, but cautiously, announced it to the congregation:

Last Sunday night the St. John's teams met with the church council to give a report. We found that the Lord had opened the hearts and hands of our people, so that when the figures were added up we found that \$2743.00 had been promised for the purchasing of the church property. Of this promised amount, \$2183.00 has been paid in . . . On Saturday, November 11, 1944 (yesterday), afternoon a check was given to the American Lutheran Church and the necessary deeds were signed. Our congregation now owns three-fourths interest in the St. John's property. May the Lord of our Church speed all further proceedings and hasten the day when other pending deals will be completed. In the meanwhile, let us each one offer up a prayer of Thanksgiving to our Lord for having guided us to this point. May he go with us in the future, just as He has been with us in the past. And may we also pray Him that He guide and direct our weak human flesh so that we may continue our dealing in the future in the same friendly way as the past.5

The transaction was consummated by A. M. Bumgarner, R. F. Sigman, and Fred H. Sigman, of the American Lutherans, to Trustees Roland E. Haase, P. M. Dellinger, C. D. Sigmon, C. L. Baker, W. G. Baker, and Vance Hollar. The instrument was recorded at the Catawba County Register of Deeds the following Monday in Book 344, Page 587, but one detail of the joint ownership and the old "union church" remained. The American Lutheran congregation maintained burial rights in the cemetery as before, and reserved the right to use the church building for funerals and/or burial services. Negotiations continued with the Reformed congregation. At one point, there were discussions to sell the church property to them. On April 1, 1945, a decision was made to offer the Reformed congregation \$1,250.00 for their property interest. Exactly two weeks later, the congregation, "by a substantial majority," agreed to buy the Reformed's property rights for \$1,600.00. The resultant deed, executed by George Herman, Garland L. Hunsucker, and L. E. Hunsucker, stipulated the same cemetery privileges, and was recorded at the Catawba County Register of Deeds on June 18, 1945, in Book 348 and page 235.6

After one hundred and forty-seven years, the original Heinrich Bobst (Henry Pope) land was owned by a single congregation. A loud "Hallelujah" rang forth. Now we can build a Church of our own!!!!

But a second possible building program emerged in the Southeastern District, as the advisability of a new Lutheran High School was being explored. A committee of P. M. Dellinger and Lee Cline was appointed to meet with other area congregations. Eventually, St. John's reported to the central committee its pledge for support of the project. Again, Glenn Smith made a tract of land available for this purpose. However, when the issue reached the district level, not unlike Concordia College's early days, the site location was contested, with several communities vying for the school. Ultimately, the project was tabled indefinitely.7

Church improvement and beautification began through the acquisition of items of "personal" Church property, rather than a new building. In the early 1940's, the congregation investigated the purchase of a new organ, although no action was taken at that time. In 1943, further inquiries were made regarding a new altar, and a committee was established to obtain gowns for the choir. By 1944, it was decided that the altar should be purchased, "provided something can be worked out" with the other congregations. This work was delayed until 1945 due to the lack of available craftsmen during the war period. Within a few months after surrender, the altar,

4. *Ibid.*, p. 138-140, 142. Haase.

5. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 142. Haase.

6. *CBII. Church Minute Book II*, pp. 147-148. Catawba County Register of Deeds, Deed Book 348, Page 235; Book 344, Page 587, Newton, NC.

7. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 150-2. Conversation with Wayne Smith (son of Glenn Smith) by Mark Smith, 1994.

as well as a new pulpit and lectern, and various chancel accessories were dedicated to the glory of God. The flags for the chancel were also received during this period. The dedication for these gifts was held on June 2, 1946, as follows:

Altar:

Memory of Jaster K. Smith by Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Smith and Wayne.

Pulpit:

Memory of Mrs. Fannie Gilbert, Mr. G. A. Arndt, and Mr. and Mrs. T. C. Hunsucker - ~~AND~~ in honor of Mr. W. F. Gilbert and Mrs. G. A. Arndt by their daughters, Mrs. William Rockett, Mrs. Berman Smith, and Miss Stella Hunsucker.

Lectern:

Given in thanksgiving for the safe-keeping of her husband while in the service of our country by Mrs. Berman E. Smith.

Dossal Ctn:

Memory of Betty Jean Yount and Jaster K. Smith by Mr. and Mrs. Guy Smith.

Cross:

Memory of Mrs. Emma Rockett by Mr. R. L. Rockett.

Vases:

Memory of Betty Jean Yount by Mr. & Mrs. A. Carl Yount and Master A. C. Yount.

Candlesticks:

Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Phillip Baker and Mr. & Mrs. Burton Cline, by Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Baker.

Missal Stand:

Honor of Mr & Mrs. Joshua B. Sigmon by Mr. & Mrs. Claude E. Sigmon.

Coll. Plates:

Honor of men and women over Sixty years of age by younger men.

Parameters:

By Ladies Aid Society.

Fair Linen:

By Ladies Aid Society.

Flags:

Given at the time of their Ninth Wedding Anniversary in honor of all those in the services by Mr. & Mrs. B. E. Smith.

Later, Mr. and Mrs. Coyte Sigmon donated flower stands in honor of William Nelson Sigmon, with the wood for this furniture being donated by Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Baker.⁸

The first offering (\$82.47) taken in the new collection plates was placed in a fund for purchase of a new organ. Upon arrival, the organ was to be dedicated in honor of all St. John's servicemen in World War II.⁹

In 1944, a committee of Glenn Smith and Clarence A. Smith were appointed to improve the cemetery by addition of a walk at the rear and other sitework. Several work days were designated, and "the members came to the cemetery and cleaned up the rocks, weeds and rubbish that had accumulated for many years." The "unsightly and overgrown shrubs" were removed, and "the improvement in appearance was remarkable!" By September, the work was completed, and allowed for the opening up of new grave plots. Mrs. Glenn Smith demonstrated her green thumb by the planting of flowers along the entire length of this walk. A drive was undertaken to create a "cemetery fund" for the perpetuation of its grounds, and a special Homecoming Service was held in 1945, with Rev. Walter Hunsucker as the guest speaker. Including the unsolicited gifts received in 1944 and 1945, plus contributions from the Homecoming Service, the cemetery improvement fund realized \$916.40 from a large list of donors from both inside and outside the congregation.¹⁰

8. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 101, 111-112, 126, 130, 140. Haase.

9. Haase.

10. *CBI* has complete list of donors during 1944-1945. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 138, 141-142. Haase. *Walter P. Hunsucker Journal*, 1945.

When Sunday School became crowded, the basement of the "hut" was cleaned up for an additional "class or two." When the out-houses needed replacement, the new "rest rooms" were constructed and "put over pits." "The Deacons were ordered to sell the old rest rooms at what they could get."¹¹

The congregation also was supporting Camp Linn-Haven and the new Lutheran Hour radio broadcast. A blanket subscription of *The Lutheran Witness* was placed in every household. Formation of a Boy Scout troop began in 1946, but proved to be not very successful. The 1948 Bible School boasted attendance of 80 pupils, and communion services were increased to once per month.¹²

Several beautification projects were undertaken around the parsonage. On August 18, 1946, an announcement of incredible local significance (that has almost been lost due to the ravages of time, but now is [un]fortunately preserved for posterity) was made:

An Opportunity - The deacons of both churches have decided to sell the chicken shed on the parsonage lot to the highest bidder. The sale will take place on Saturday afternoon at two o'clock-September 7, 1946. There is also an electric motor and a cellar pump (water).

The major items of church news of the following week all involved "The Parsonage."

Chicken Shed Sale next Sat.

Wedding: Fred Monroe Hunsucker and Lorena Alma Elliot, Aug 24, at parsonage.

The parsonage is not the same any more! No - the "house for the preacher" has a new white coat (in fact it took two coats of paint to do the job right). It certainly looks fine - all members are invited to drive by the next time you come to town and see for yourself!

Our own Harold Rader supervised the painting of the house and barn and it is an "A No. 1" job as you can easily see!¹³

After spirited bidding, the highly-advertised chicken shed auction realized \$66.50 (\$49.87 for St. John's, \$16.63 for Immanuel), but the lucky bidder was not recorded and this crucial information may be lost forever. Who bought the chicken shed? Where was it moved? Does anyone have a photo? Did Pastor Haase not like fried chicken or hen's eggs? Who really cares?¹⁴

While many small improvement projects had been completed satisfactorily, the ultimate goal of the congregation was a new Church. As the War ended, the area labor force was restored to pre-war conditions, and construction could be resumed for domestic purposes. The first step was digging a well, which was in operation by the early part of 1946, and had a total cost of \$860.92, as shared by the congregation and the Ladies Aid. Hot and cold running water were then supplied to the kitchen in the "Hut."¹⁵

Chairman W. G. Dellinger appointed a Building Committee of C. D. Sigman, Sr. (Chairman), Henry Cline, Vance Hollar, Harry Lee Yount, and Gaither Yount to pursue the new church project. J. K. Smith was appointed to lead a petition drive to get the road in front of the church paved. A Finance Committee of Henry Cline, Glenn Smith, Lee Cline, Eugene Baker, and Clarence Smith was appointed to begin the fund-raising effort, and Berman Smith was elected Building Treasurer. The committees explored several options. One was the feasibility of renovation to the existing church building, and a second was an entirely new facility. A canvassing committee was established, and sent to explain in detail how each family could help build a new church for their children and grand-children. On March 31, 1946, preliminary plans were approved with minor changes. By the beginning of 1947, the Building Fund had \$8,107.96 in hand, pledges which increased this amount to over \$25,000.00, and timber donations of over 1500 board feet.¹⁶

11. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 125, 136, 137. Haase.

12. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 123, 176-178, 184-185. Haase.

13. Haase.

14. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 165.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 155. Haase.

16. *CBII. Church Minute Book II*, pp. 151-170. Haase. *Gaither Yount Notes*, who was a building committee member. The canvassing committee consisted of Gene Baker, A. Carl Yount, Gordon Simmons, Lee Cline, Coyte Sigmon, Berman Smith, Clarence Smith, Cecil Baker, Earl Baker, Glenn Smith, Herman Smith, and L. A. Yount.

In 1947, work began in earnest. A tract of timber, located just east of the Eugene Baker homeplace, was purchased from Mrs. E. V. Little for \$3,050.00, and approval was given to begin the logging operation, including some timber on the church property itself. The cutting, logging, sawing, and hauling of lumber was contracted by the Baker family--Eugene, Guy, Earl, and Richard. By May, they were requesting volunteers to help hack the lumber. These methods proved highly successful, and a surplus of timber was obtained.¹⁷

Concurrent efforts were being made for the "extras." Walter G. Dellinger was in charge of the memorial windows, and Gaither Yount and the Walther League undertook the obtaining of a neon cross for the new church tower, which arrived and was lit for the first time on June 15 at a special Vesper Service. The league decided that the cross should be dedicated in memory of two of its former members, Jaster Kermit Smith and Betty Jean Yount. The Ladies Aid was responsible for the purchase of a new organ with a little assistance from the congregational treasury, and by March of 1947, it was ordered. In August, the new Wurlitzer organ, costing \$3,550.00, arrived and was installed, and the congregation subsidized organist Rena Canipe's instruction in operation of an instrument far more advanced than the pump-organs she had played for years. Its glorious sound was heard for the first time on August 24, and Mrs. Evelyn Reynolds presented an organ recital on September 21, which inspired a free-will offering of \$244.61. Work towards the new church was progressing satisfactorily, as by April, lumber was being hacked on the church grounds to stimulate interest in the project. An even larger hack was at the Baker sawmill, and appeals went out for volunteers "to haul and to hack."¹⁸

The year 1948 marked the continuation of the efforts for the new church. A "Pew Fund" campaign was kicked off with a \$25.00 donation by Henry Cline and many other donations followed. Cline also donated a set of brass candelabras in memory of his sister, Mrs. Eugene Baker, and Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Smith followed with the donation of candle-lighters in honor/memory of their parents, and in memory of Wayne's brother, Jaster. A new piano was purchased by the Walther League, and placed in the "Hut."¹⁹

On March 7, 1948, the final building plans were presented to the congregation and approved by a large majority. Upon motion, the vote was made unanimous. The plans included a new sanctuary which extended east from the old building, and the existing building was to be brick veneered and renovated into a two story educational wing. Construction began in April.²⁰

By November of 1948, the Building Treasurer reported \$14,763.87 in Building Fund, with payments of \$2,199.17 for brick, \$3,889.15 to Cline Lumber for materials, and a balance of \$8,675.55. The congregation was canvassed for a second time "to raise the badly needed funds for the purpose of paying off bills arising from building of the new church."²¹

Several cost-cutting options were studied. Some felt it imperative to brick veneer the exterior of the old church, and preferred to leave the upper floor of the educational wing unfinished until funds were available. Other options were to "leave off the steeple and to use the funds to finish the top floor of the old church for Sunday School purposes." Eventually, the collections from the first and third Sundays of the month were earmarked for the Building Fund.²²

By the end of 1948, tensions had grown within the congregation, due to personal, family, and construction project disagreements. Pastor Haase offered his resignation, and a special Church Council meeting was held with area "Visiting Pastor" Walter P. Hunsucker presiding. After opening with prayer, apologies were offered and accepted, and it was unanimously resolved that everyone work "together for the Glory of God." Pastor Hunsucker closed the meeting with the Benediction, and all parties shook hands. A later meeting with a District officer served to aggravate the issues anew, and completion of the new church met with some confusion. The election of officers for the upcoming year was also a somewhat tedious ordeal, and eventually L. A. Yount accepted the Chairman's office after several meetings and much discussion.²³

17. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 171-172, 175-178. *Gaither Yount Notes*.

18. *CBII. Church Minute Book II*, pp. 180-181, 187-188. *Haase*. One source lists Carl Yount on the Memorial Window Committee with Dellinger.

19. *CBII*, 1948. *Haase*.

20. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 185-191.

21. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 180, 188-193. *Haase*.

22. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 190-191, 193.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-194.

In March of 1949, Pastor Haase received a Call from a congregation in Irmo, South Carolina. At a joint parish meeting, he announced that he was inclined to accept the Call, and was granted a release from the congregations. Haase preached his farewell sermon on March 20 from the text, "The peace of God which passeth all understanding . . ." He was requested to preach a future service in the new Church -- either the first service or the dedication.²⁴

At this point, one new person entered the situation, and one old person re-entered. The week after Pastor Haase departed, the congregation heard a sermon by Rev. James L. Summers. Summers remained after the services, and offered his well-received advice and direction to the Building Committee on proper completion of the new chancel. His leadership and organizational abilities impressed the observers. In April, as St. John's and Immanuel opted to terminate the joint parish arrangement, discussions began on the selection of a new pastor. At a called meeting on June 12th, 1949, the unanimous Call was made to Pastor Summers, who was then serving as Executive Secretary of the Southeastern District Missions Board. Summers accepted, but was committed to his current position for a few more months and could not serve immediately.²⁵

In the interim, "old-reliable," retired, seventy-four year old, Professor C. O. Smith was selected to serve as supply Pastor, and to continue the catechetical classes begun by Haase. He was to be paid the same amount as Haase had received, and Smith in turn, pledged to donate his salary back to the Building Fund. Smith was familiar with the congregation's unrest, as he was related to many of the St. John's families and was well-known by all. In 1896, it was secretary C. O. Smith who penned the strong language rebuking the actions of the Tennessee Synod, that eventually caused St. John's to join the Missouri Synod. During the first half of the twentieth century, when St. John's needed supply services, they looked towards Concordia College, C. O. Smith, or both (as he was a professor there for twenty-four years). He had stepped into the St. John's pulpit more often than many of the Called and Installed pastors, and his annual historical addresses at Homecomings and Anniversaries had become tradition. The number of pastors he installed (or assisted) at St. John's remains a record. While his former students remember him as "strict" or "stern," they also recall that "he made history come alive," and revere his scholarship. Many delight in telling the practical jokes performed by mischievous students, and Smith's predictable attempts at retaliation. Nearly fifty years to the month after his first major address to his home congregation, he was now requested to lead it through a trying period, until arrival of its next pastor.²⁶

A calming presence was felt and the construction project proceeded. A cornerstone laying ceremony was held on May 15th at 3:30 P. M., with Pastor Mennen providing the sermon. Rev. C. O. Smith performed the official laying of the cornerstone, and naturally, used this occasion to offer one of his historical speeches. The church building was placed into a nearly-complete condition, and Pastor Haase preached the first sermon in the new building on August 7, 1949. One member related that C. O. Smith "preached the best ever in his career" during these six months.²⁷

On October 2, 1949, Smith confirmed the first class in the new Church. At a special service that same day, Pastor Summers was installed by Smith, with the assistance of Pastor Hunsucker. The installation sermon was delivered by Rev. Herman C. Scherer from the Mission Board. Pastors Lindemeyer, Lineberger, Gabbert, Rittman, Koerber, Sieving, and Schratt also assisted. Summers, a Missouri native, was a 1922 Seminary graduate. He had previously served as pastor in Alexander County when he was Called to Concordia College, as Professor in Hebrew, History, Mathematics, English, Science, typewriting, and shorthand at various academic levels. He became Athletic Director, Librarian, and also served the St. Stephen's congregation. His knowledge and abilities were diverse, but he was commonly called "Coach Summers" during his few years at the College. Letters of appreciation were sent to Pastors Smith and Haase for their past efforts and guidance to St. John's.²⁸

As the church building was nearing completion in 1949, there was a shortfall in the Building Fund. The congregation agreed to borrow one thousand dollars each from J. K. Smith, Guy Smith, Glenn Smith, Berman

24. *CBI. Church Minute Book II*, p. 199.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 199, 201, 204-205.

26. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 199, previously cited pages. *Smith Autobiography*. Conversations at Concordia College Reunion, 1994 (video at Concordia Church Archives).

27. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 202. The cornerstone was donated by a firm in Hickory, but name was not included in Minutes, p. 188. Date of the first service in new building was found on a loose paper in *Church Minute Book II*. *Gaither Yount Conversation*, 27 Nov 1994.

28. *CBI. Church Minute Book II*, p. 207, 209. *The Corillon*, Vol. II, p. 9.

Smith, Carl Yount, Walter Dellinger, and Lee Cline. These loans were interest free for ninety days. In June, an additional canvas of the congregation was conducted to "wipe out the church debt."²⁹

A dedication service was tentatively scheduled for November 20, 1949, to coincide with the 150th anniversary. Later, this was modified, and only the anniversary celebration was held on that date, with the dedication postponed indefinitely until the following summer--so a large crowd and area congregations could join the festivities. On anniversary Sunday, the congregation was beckoned to the church by the clear tones of the newly-installed church bell, donated by the Glenn Smith family. District representative, Pastor Edwin Pieplow, was present and offered the sermon. After lunch in the "Hut", an afternoon service was held, including a historical address.³⁰

At the regular election of officers in December 1949, Preston M. Dellinger tendered his resignation as Elder. A written resolution of thanks was given "to commend him on his past service." It is often too easy to forget the faithful and tireless efforts and devotion of a church's laymen. Dellinger remains an example of dedication to his Church over a long period of time. He was the first delegate from St. John's to the Missouri English Synod, when the congregation was accepted into its membership in 1897. He first began his service on various church committees in that same year, and assumed the Secretary's office in 1904 and several other years thereafter. He was a leader on the committee which formed the joint pastorate with Bethel in 1911. A year later, he was elected Deacon, an office he held for about ten years. The Sunday School program was revived in 1914 with Dellinger as its Superintendent until 1935, and he was on the Building Committee for the first Sunday School Building (the "Hut"). When Concordia College was in need of members for its Board of Trustees, Dellinger and his brother-in-law, J. K. Smith, were installed. Dellinger also was on the committee that successfully approached the Missouri Synod about purchase of the first parsonage in 1936. Again, at the inaugural meeting of the Southeastern District in 1939, it was Dellinger who ably represented the St. John's congregation with Pastor Rockett. When a committee was established to purchase the interests of the Reformed and the American Lutheran congregations, Preston could not be omitted. He also served as Elder from 1938 until his resignation at the end of 1949. Hardly a year can be found in the first half of the twentieth century when Dellinger did not assume a significant leadership role in the congregation, as he was a regular delegate to Synod and District meetings, and was a regular appointee to the various committees assigned to an assortment of special projects. Dellinger, who was born when St. John's was still holding services in the old log church, died on November 28, 1950, and was buried in the cemetery two days later. Throughout the long history of St. John's, there were many other laypersons similarly deserving of recognition, but Dellinger's contributions were undeniably outstanding.³¹

As St. John's entered the 1950's, its yearly operational budget was set at \$6,500, and two building fund offerings per month were the norm. Finishing touches for the new church continued. An "organ problem" arose due to far-too-regular electronic malfunctions. In October 1949, the congregation voted to trade the two-year-old instrument in on a new one. After installation, a special recital was held in February 1950. C. Detlev Sigmon also donated an electric light for the back of the Nave, possibly as a reminder to the unusually long-winded C. O. Smith and others.³²

Upon termination of the parish arrangement with Immanuel, the disposition of the jointly-owned parsonage property arose. When Immanuel initially desired to subdivide the property, St. John's then offered \$1,000.00 for Immanuel's 1/4th interest. When originally suggested that the house be auctioned, the idea was rejected. A joint meeting was then scheduled between the two congregations, and Immanuel offered \$4,875.00. Eventually, it was decided that the only way to settle the issue was to auction the property, and Gaither Yount was authorized to bid up to \$6,700.00 for the total property, or \$4,500.00 for the house alone. On Saturday, May 28, 1949, the entire parsonage property (minus one chicken shed) realized a winning bid of \$7,950.00 from Mr. and Mrs. Otto Moritz, with proceeds to be prorated between the congregations. Upon receipt, a new Parsonage Fund was begun.³³

29. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 197, 204, 207.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 210-211. *Pastor Summers Church Bulletins, 1949-1955*, are nearly complete, hereinafter referenced *Summers*.

31. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 213. Many other sources previously cited from *Church Minute Book II*, also Synod and District Minutes, *The Carillon*, etc. Date of death and funeral from *CBII*.

32. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 210. *Summers*.

33. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 202, 203, 205. Loose paper in *Church Minute Book II* details St. John's bidding instructions. Catawba County Register of Deeds Deed Book 398, p. 89, Newton, NC. The deed was from Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church to Otis F. and Ruby Alice

Until a parsonage could be constructed, arrangements had been made for Pastor Summers to live in Martin McRee's apartment in Conover. The former "timber committee" of Glenn Smith, Lee Cline, and Eugene Baker was re-directed to find a suitable parsonage lot. In January 1950, they reported location of two lots just inside the town limits of Conover, for a cost of \$3,000.00. The congregation authorized purchase, and directed the purchasing committee to secure plans and cost estimates for a new parsonage. In February, the plans were approved, and the committee was authorized to proceed.³⁴

As one major construction project was winding down, another was cranking up. On February 5, 1950, the committees on the church project were released with a rising vote of thanks--including the Finance Committee--as the church was paid for in full!!! New Parsonage Committees were then established, with Gaither Yount and L. A. Yount, Jr. being added to the former committee that procured the new property. A Finance Committee consisted of Jake Workman, Walter G. Dellinger, Doud F. Smith, William L. Rockett, and C. D. Sigmon, Sr., with Darwin Smith as Treasurer. These two committees could not have had a glimpse of the challenge that lay ahead.³⁵

Timber for the new parsonage was donated as follows:³⁶

Mr. Eugene Baker	6,000 ft.
Mr. Earl Baker	2,000 ft.
Mr. Lee Cline	6,000 ft.
Mr. Dowd Smith	5,000 ft.
Mr. D. A. Yount	4,000 ft.
Mr. Gaither Yount	<u>1,000 ft.</u>
TOTAL	24,000 ft.

Appeals went out for volunteers to help "cut and haul logs," as "many workers make for early completion of a large assignment." For the following two weeks, the timber was being cut, logged, hauled, docked, and sawed, and the lumber was hacked to air dry for the new parsonage. Trees from the Church property were being harvested. On Friday afternoon, March 17, 1950, shouts of victory could be heard near Lee Cline Road as the last log was unloaded at the saw-mill. The hard work was done, as the construction of the parsonage was now in the hands of the committees and the contractor.³⁷

At the regular meeting on March 5, 1950, "Motion was made and passed to continue our meetings after service as before." It made no difference that this motion may have carried unanimously, there was not another "regular" meeting after the service for quite some time. . . . The Walther League purchased twenty-five new hymnals, which were used for a total of one church service. . . . A few hours after the final log rolled off a member's farm truck at the sawmill, there was a large unscheduled gathering of St. John's members and concerned citizens about two miles to the East.

Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. Haggai 1:8

Moritz.
34. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 212, 215, 218. *Summers*.
35. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 219.
36. *Gaither Yount Notes*.
37. *Summers*. *Gaither Yount Notes*.



St. John's Walther League 1948-1949



Remodeling of the 1883 church in 1948



St. John's first Junior Choir (1949)
Ila Smith made all the choir robes.



St. John's Ladies Aid 1949-50



Outside of St. John's remodeled 1949



Inside of St. John's Church remodeled in 1949



Only class confirmed in the 1949 church which burned.
Supply pastor Rev. C. O. Smith is pictured with the class.



St. John's congregation prior to the church dedication
in front of the church which burned on March 17, 1950.

Chapter 16

OUT OF THE ASHES

And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people. And there came a fire out from before the Lord, . . . ; which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces. Leviticus 9:23-24

. . . Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord. 1 Chronicles 28:20

Friday, March 17, 1950 started out as a normal day for the St. John's Congregation. Those employed in Conover and other nearby towns were hard at work. Those working with the logging operation for the parsonage were admiring their completed project, and breathing a sigh of relief. It was now still a few months before the grand dedication celebration of the new Church. Some work and the finishing touches still remained, but the new organ had been installed.

Irene Baker (Campbell) was the organist at that time, and was still learning all of the fancy features of the new Wurlitzer electronic organ. She had picked up her young niece, Libby Whitener, and was on her way to the Church to practice for the Sunday morning service, and the next week's Lenten Service. She didn't think the day was in any way special, and certainly did not realize that she would be the first witness to what became the most incredible eighteen months in the long history of St. John's.

As she drove up the hill to the Church, nothing seemed unusual. As she turned into the parking lot, she noticed smoke coming out of the round window over the altar . . .

CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT!!!

"Who's got a phone near here? I don't know of one! What do I do with Libby? I'll leave her with brother Cecil nearby, and head for a phone. Where's the nearest phone? I've got to call the Fire Department! There's no phone until I get into town." Irene's thoughts were frantic. She traveled down Highway 16 to Conover and remembered the phone at Bill Rockett's house, and pulled in his driveway. A call was made to the Fire Department, and a second one, to Pastor Summers.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH WAS ON FIRE!!

The next group to arrive entered the burning building and had intentions to salvage anything possible. Brave efforts were made to remove the new organ while the fire was ablaze around them; however, this valiant effort proved futile as the men did not realize that the footboard could be dismantled, and the organ resulted in debris at the door's threshold.

By the time Irene returned, the cars had begun to line up on the Highway. Hundreds of spectators soon arrived, and many were stunned and looking downward in utter frustration.

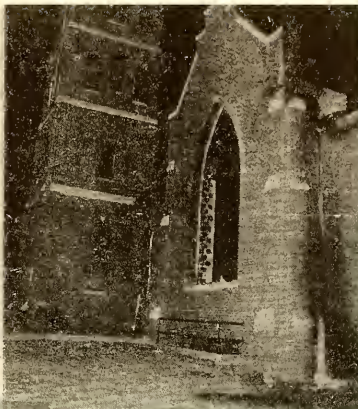
When the firemen arrived, their water tank truck found itself woefully insufficient to resist the fury. It was a slow and cruel matter of time. Human intervention proved meaningless.

The fire drafted up the seventy-five foot tall bell tower like smoke up a chimney and encircled the new bell. Flames spewed forth through the tower's wood louvers as the sun met the horizon. Eventually, the fire penetrated

Conversations with Irene Baker Hunsucker, Lorene Baker Campbell, Ila Smith, Wayne Smith, 1993 by Mark Smith; Vance Hollar, Gaither Yount, 1994 by Mark Smith; many other members and area citizens were present and interviewed by Mark Smith. The account of the fire is well documented in area newspaper articles. This citation is not repeated until other references are used, hereinafter referenced *Conversations*.



Fire of undetermined origin destroyed the new brick veneer building of St. John's Lutheran church three miles North of Conover Friday night. Members of the congregation said the fire swept through the church rapidly and that Newton and Conover firemen were helpless from the start, having no water except what they carried in their trucks. The dramatic ruins are seen in one photo and the church ablaze in the other.—(Daily Record Photos)



Newly Remodeled Edifice

Newspaper account of March 17, 1950 fire



Remains of St. John's from the fire

the tower's wood roof structure and swirled around the recently-lighted cross, creating a display quite different than the one to which the community had become accustomed. The fire finally damaged one of the cross's supports, and it was in jeopardy of crashing to the ground. It was leaning . . . leaning . . . now held in place by a single brace.

The fire finally abated when its fuel supply exhausted. . . . The solitary support held. . . . The cross did not fall.

When the devastation had run its course and the smoke had floated out over the countryside, personal sacrifices of time and building materials, the hard-earned money of the members, the timber donations, nearly four years' efforts and planning, the chancel furniture, the memorial windows, and the hopes and dreams of the Congregation lay in ash and ruination behind the bell tower -- which still proudly displayed its tilted Cross for miles around during daylight hours.

"Beneath the Cross of Jesus" assembled a saddened group. Many tears were shed. There were many misgivings. "Lord, why are you testing us like this?" But when these tears were wiped away, the eyes became as fiery as the inferno that had conquered the un-dedicated St. John's Church, and these new fires were ignited and perpetuated by the flames of faith in the hearts and souls of the people.

Obviously, under these trying conditions, there could be no services this Sunday. **THIS WAS NOT AN OPTION!!!!** The strength and encouragement from Pastor Summers came forth. There certainly **WOULD** be a Church service - **ESPECIALLY ON THIS SUNDAY!!!** The kindness of the Newton-Conover School System was shown, and arrangements were made to use the Auditorium at Conover School on Sunday, March 19--two days after the fire.

These first services posed a few unusual difficulties. As all of the hymnals, including the twenty-five recently purchased by the Walther League, were a part of the rubble behind the crooked cross on St. John's bell tower, that Sunday's hymns were hurriedly typed and printed in a new bulletin. Pastor Summers' personality, experience, and encouragement were at the forefront, when he selected the following hymn, to be accompanied by Irene on the school's piano:

1. My Jesus, as Thou wilt;
Oh, may Thy will be mine!
Into Thy hand of love
I would my all resign.
Thro' sorrow or thro' joy
Conduct me as Thine own
And help me still to say,
My Lord, Thy will be done.
2. My Jesus, as Thou wilt.
If needy here and poor,
Give me Thy people's bread,
Thy Word, so rich and sure.
This manna from above
Let my soul feed upon;
And if all else shall fail,
My Lord, Thy will be done.
3. My Jesus, as Thou wilt.
Tho' seen thro' many a tear,
Let not my star of hope
Grow dim or disappear.
Since Thou on earth hast wept
And sorrowed oft alone,
If I must weep with Thee,
My Lord, Thy will be done.
4. My Jesus, as Thou wilt.
When death itself draws nigh,
Unto Thy wounded side

For refuge I would fly
 And, clinging to Thee, go
 Where Thou before has gone.
 My times are in Thy hand:
 My Lord, Thy will be done.

5. My Jesus as Thou wilt.
 All shall be well for me;
 Each changing future scene
 I gladly trust with Thee.
 Thust to my home above
 I travel calmly on
 And sing in life or death,
 My Lord, Thy will be done. Amen.²

His sermon themes were "The Lord moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform," and "God helping and guiding us, we shall rise up to build to His glory." God had spoken, and now it was up to man to accept it and go forward.

THY WILL BE DONE!³

On Wednesday, March 22, a meeting was held in the "Hut," the all-wood tinder box that sat behind the Church, and which by some miracle was spared by the fire.⁴

Before the following Sunday, God had made his presence felt in the St. John's congregation once again, as He saw fit to take member Geitner Simmons unto himself, as Simmons was stricken by a heart attack. Condolences were tendered to the Simmons family. However, during this second service at Conover School, Pastor Summers continued to reassure family and congregation, by including Hymn 370--somewhat unusual for the Lenten season.

1. My hope is built on nothing less
 Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
 I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
 But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
2. When darkness veils His lovely face,
 I rest on His unchanging grace;
 In ev'ry high and stormy gale
 My anchor holds within the veil.
3. His oath, His covenant, and blood
 Support me in the whelming flood;
 When every earthly prop gives way,
 He then is all my Hope and Stay.
4. When He shall come with trumpet sound,
 Oh, may I then in Him be found,
 Clothed in His righteousness alone,
 Faultless to stand before the throne.

Chorus. **On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
 All other ground is sinking sand.⁵**

2. *Summers*. The weekly bulletins during the period (only one or two missing) provide excellent commentary of this helter-skelter period of reconstruction. Thanks go the James L. Summers family for donating these back to the congregation after his death.

3. *Ibid*.

4. *Ibid*.

After the service, a congregational meeting was held, with only men being allowed to participate at that time. The outcome of the Wednesday meeting in the "Hut" was offered to the voters for consideration. The convictions were unanimous, and there was but one thing to do -- **BUILD ANOTHER CHURCH!** The women of the Church weren't going to be left out of this endeavor, as the Ladies' Aid met at the same time, and their resolve was equal! They'd do their part to see it happen! In fact, no member of St. John's would be omitted from the events that followed!!! Cecil Baker and Guy Smith were appointed to a committee to "look after the cleaning up of the ruins of the Church," and every Saturday, "and every other day that we can," were established as work days to clean up the debris.⁶

Other Church activities must be curtailed due to the inconvenience out "on the Hill." **THIS WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION!** Sunday School teachers and the choir were scheduled to meet on Thursday, and Saturday School was planned for the following Saturday. The Wednesday night Lenten Service was held in the "Hut," with the old pump-organ that was removed from the old Church. "Come - gather in the shadow of the cross - watch this special hour with Christ our Savior. Bring a Friend," was Pastor Summers's invitation.⁷

The community was deeply moved by the spirit and "pioneer determination" of St. John's, and many letters of sympathy, condolence, and love poured in. The congregations of Bethel, Holy Cross, Trinity (Reformed), St. Peter's, and Concordia offered the use of their facilities for services when not in use by their congregation. Kind letters of thanks were returned for these gracious offers, and that of Concordia was accepted with heart-felt gratitude. Service times were re-arranged, so St. John's would hold early services and utilize the nave at Concordia. This began on April 2nd, and Sunday School was held afterwards in the basement of the Concordia School and occasionally in neighboring houses.⁸

Since this was Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week, alternate sites were required for customary Church meetings and upcoming services. The Walther League met that night at the home of W. L. Rockett, and the L. L. L., at Glenn Smith's. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services were held jointly upon invitation from the St. Peter's congregation.⁹

The Easter morning service was held in Concordia's sanctuary, beginning at 8:00 A. M., with the message being, "Peace Be Unto You." The following week was full of the normal St. John's routine, with Walther League and Sunday School teachers' meeting at W. L. Rockett's, L. L. L. and Choirs at Glenn Smith's, and Saturday School at the "Hut." The first of a long series of Ladies' Aid Bake Sales was held on the following Saturday at Glenn Rowe's Store in Conover. Church life continued without missing a beat, although with much inconvenience and without a suitable building.¹⁰

By April 23, about a month after the fire, the first donation was published:

\$252, representing the late Geitner Simmons memorials sent to the family by sympathetic friends has been placed in the hands of the Building Fund for **THE NEW ST. JOHN'S CHURCH!!** We commend the Baxter Simmons family for this evidence of love for their Church. We pray God's blessing upon them all.¹¹

By this date, it was estimated that the salvageable portions of the building, which primarily included the bell tower (with the tilted cross) and the foundations were of a value of \$20,000.00. The building's insurance resulted in a payoff of \$35,280.00, much of which was later diverted to the Parsonage, which was about to begin. But the estimates for cleaning up the mess and re-construction totaled \$100,000.00, leaving the congregation woefully short. May 31st was set by Pastor Summers as a target date for contributions and pledges. This date would be the true test for St. John's. The people had the motivation and the man-power. Did they have the means?¹²

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 221, 224. *Summers*.

7. *Ibid.*

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

Pastor Summers had gone to work. He personally approached many members of St. John's, examined their commitment and gained their promises. He also talked to several others in the community. Soon over \$2,000 was pledged or donated from outside sources, and over \$7,000 from members. Another plea went out to the land owners in the congregation for donation of timber. By the end of April, the Parsonage bids had been received, with anticipation of starting construction. That this project had not been terminated in its entirety due to the circumstances demonstrates the unusual determination of the congregation to go forward.¹³

But the congregation, in a Voters Meeting, overrode Pastor Summers's target date, and backed it up from May 31 to May 21. They were in a bigger hurry to get the project started than he anticipated. Perhaps the congregation did not understand the motives of the Pastor, and likewise, maybe the Pastor did not fully understand the strong will and impatience of his members. Nevertheless, the date was set in favor of the Congregational vote.¹⁴

For the next several weeks, anticipating the revised, big Sunday in May, many things occurred. The appeals from Pastor Summers were calm, but convincing, and they deserve the proper respect of repetition:

Call for the best that is in our people. There must be a rallying of our forces in order to be equal to the important task the Lord has seen fit to place before us.

The congregation voted to set aside the third Sunday in May as the day on which to bring in our gifts and our pledges for the new church building. To guide you in making your decisions, follow the direction which the Holy Scripture gives.

"Freely ye have received, freely give." When Jesus was called on to give something for mankind and also for each member of St. John's Congregation he had but one purpose: "My meat is to do the will of the Father which sent Me." He gave Himself. He gave Himself willingly. Your salvation depended on that gift of God for you. Without Christ your Savior's gift of Himself into death for your sins you could not be saved. Salvation is alone in and through Christ and is altogether God's gift to you.

In the building program of the Church, the members of St. John's have an opportunity to give special evidence of their love in and through liberal giving which will glorify the Name of the Lord. Will you measure up to what he expects from you? From some he expects very much; from others not so much. Your gift to the Lord in this important building program must have the approval of God. It is a little matter whether man approves or not. It is important for your soul's welfare that God approves.

"Freely ye have received, freely give."

"God loveth a cheerful giver", not a miserly giver.

"Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through or steal; For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."¹⁵

Every man, woman and child at St. John's was involved. The Ladies' Aid held a ham supper at the Newton Legion Building on May 5th, over 500 attended, and the food was reported as "tasty and abundant." The men were attending to regular Saturday sitework at the Church, in order to remove the debris left by the fire and clean up any brick that could be incorporated into the new Church. The Walther Leagues did not miss a meeting, and helped out wherever they could.¹⁶

The Building Committee of the destroyed church was combined with the Parsonage Committee into a joint committee consisting of C. D. Sigmon, Sr., Vance Hollar, Gaither Yount, Lee Cline, Glenn Smith, L. A. Yount, Jr., and Carl Yount. But with two construction projects, sub-committees were set up with Vance Hollar, Gaither

13. *Summers. Conversations.*

14. *Summers.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. *Ibid.*

Yount, and Lee Cline being assigned to the Church sub-committee, and Glenn Smith and L. A. Yount, Jr., to the Parsonage sub-committee. Pastor Summers rarely failed to attend a meeting.¹⁷

Mr. Glenn Yount, of Newton, who had considerable architectural education and experience, was commissioned to prepare the building plans. On the first Sunday in May, a Building Committee meeting was held to review the preliminary ideas. And again, the shepherd encouraged the flock:

He that loves any thing - money, goods, lands - or any person more than me, the Lord says: "Is not worthy of me." God FIRST always.¹⁸

And as the day of financial reckoning approached, Summers repeated:

It goes without saying that all members of St. John's will cooperate in the manner in which the glory of our gracious Lord will be served. The Lord has allowed this important task of rebuilding our Church to be placed in our hands. The Lord tells us to rise up and build to His glory. The Lord will give us the power and the grace and the love to follow in the way which will resound to his praise. Let us seize upon it as a privilege and an opportunity to serve the Lord gladly.¹⁹

On the target date set by the Congregation, Pastor Summers reminded them:

Today the members of St. John's, after careful consideration of the matter will bring an offering for the Building Fund for the new Church and educational unit to be erected as soon as possible. Those not able or ready at the present time to make full remittance will have the privilege to pledge for this cause and to remit monthly or according to a schedule arranged for this purpose.

We pray the Lord's blessing upon the giver and also upon the gift toward this much needed building. May the Lord give you liberal and willing hearts and hands for this most worthy purpose. Whatever you give or pledge on this day let it be done in the name of our Lord and altogether to his glory. After all, it is the Lord who builds the House and they labor in vain who labor in any other name. In this endeavor, "Quit ye like men," says the Lord.

The prayers of all the members of St. John's should daily ascend to the throne of grace for the successful conclusion of our building program to the honor of our God.²⁰

Alas, on May 21, this fund-raising effort ran short of the target of \$100,000. However, it garnered \$8,000 more than was currently in the treasury--which was a considerable sum in 1950--especially after just having completed a significant building project and the consequent drainage of personal savings accounts. The congregation was nearly \$26,000 short. But hard work and determination persevered. By this time, John Pharr, respected residential contractor in the Conover area, had begun work on the parsonage, and the men of St. John's continued cleanup at the Church.²¹

By June, the first outside wave of support had come from the daughter and grand-daughter churches, many of whose family ancestors were buried at St. John's, and who demonstrated their brotherly and sisterly love and provided generous assistance. Such benevolent gifts justify the honor of repeating their names, rather than the customary practice to the contrary:

Trinity Ev. Reformed Church	\$500.00
First Presbyterian Church	\$100.00
Concordia Lutheran Church	\$517.45
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church	\$152.00
Bethel Lutheran Church	\$150.00
Immanuel Lutheran Church	\$ 46.00
Mt. Olive Walther League	\$ 10.0022

17. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 224. *Summers*.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Ibid.*

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*

The business community around Conover and Newton also assisted in the early fund-raising campaign:

Broyhill Furniture Company	\$200.00
Herman-Sipe & Co.	\$500.00
Warlong Glove Co.	\$225.00
Employees Southern Fum. Co.	\$ 95.35
Employees Newton Glove Mill	\$ 76.6023

Pastor Summers and the fund-raising committee also approached many outside individuals for private contributions, and these efforts garnered \$1,273.00 for the early drive.²⁴

So that these donations are placed in economic perspective, based on the construction costs of the 1990's, these donations can be multiplied by about 10 or more to equal 1990's value in 1950 dollars.

Others offered moral support in a wide variety of ways. One of the more unusual facility gestures came from Coyte D. Carpenter on Rock Barn Road. He had built and owned what was commonly known in the community as the "round-house." This building was made available to St. John's for recreation purposes, "since there is no place for recreation at our own at the present time." This offer was accepted more than once, and was the site of social functions held by the youth and choirs -- which could not slow down due to lack of a building.²⁵

The congregational activities continued as normal, but at abnormal locations. These events go so far as to include softball and related practice. The logging operation was in process.²⁶

There was going to be a new Church Building at St. John's! The Pastor, the Building Committee, the Congregation, and the community were all behind it. Yet God's test of the Congregation's faith and strength was not complete:

St. John's Congregation extends sympathy to Mrs. D. E. Cline and family on the occasion of the death of Mr. Cline.

St. John's Congregation extends heartfelt sympathy to the family of Howard Baker.

The hail storm of Friday afternoon was very severe hereabouts, and a number of our members and friends suffered severe loss of crop and garden. To all of you who thus were stricken by this storm, we wish to express good wishes and the prayer that your fields may yet yield goodly harvests. Those of us whose fields and gardens were not harmed by the storm should be truly humbled and give our special thanks unto God. We have in no way deserved the special favor of the Lord. In the storm we see the power and fury which could lay us all low and we note also the weakness of man. The blessings for our life here in time must come from the Lord. It is He who maketh farms to yield and it is He who blesses the labors of our arms. Forget not the fields are His, the harvest also, and our goods. Give unto him praise and glory, honor and gifts.²⁷

As many members of St. John's were farmers, this last test could have ceased their motivations towards a new Church in its entirety. It was too late in the season to re-sow the fields, many of which were completely destroyed. Without funds to tend, work around the farm was reduced considerably. Their attentions turned to the tilted cross full-time. "God works in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform."²⁸

Pastor Summers directed the congregation, and gained supervisors over specific projects.

For the coming weeks let us concentrate on the work of getting the refuse removed from the building site so that the new work can proceed unhampered. If you have a few hour's time get in touch with Messrs. Guy Smith or Cecil Baker. We commend you in getting the logs to the mills and hacking the lumber.²⁹

23. *Ibid.*

24. *Ibid.* Names of donors are included later.

25. *Ibid.*

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Conversations.*

29. *Summers.*

Plans for the new Church were reviewed at the home of Mr. C. D. Sigmon, Sr. in June. Glenn Yount proposed that the area of the remaining building that was formerly the Sanctuary become the Parish Hall and educational wing. The area of the former educational wing should be enlarged somewhat and become the new Sanctuary. This arrangement placed the Sanctuary over the ground where the 1883 church building stood, and not far from the location of the "commodious log building," constructed circa 1800.³⁰

By June, the work on the parsonage had started already, and was progressing, and a month later, the masonry was complete up to floor level. Congregational activities, including Walther League and a Camp Linn Haven meeting, continued this summer as if there had never been a fire.³¹

A Building Committee meeting was held at Gaither Yount's house, on Friday, July 14, 1950, when bids were reviewed. As the new church building had not been given any kind of formal authorization, this meeting was followed by a meeting before services on Sunday morning, and a congregational meeting was held after Sunday School, whereby the contract was let to Bumgarner Construction Co. with "unanimity of mind and purpose," bearing in mind that much work already had been and soon would be performed by the church members "en masse."³²

The Ladies Aid met at the same time to prepare for their Ice Cream Supper to be held the following Saturday on Glenn Smith's lawn.³³

And the volunteer work by the members came forth for the new church. The logging operations were already in full force, with timber being cut from numerous locations, including the Church property and the "Mill Right" tract on Lyle's Creek, owned by the B. E. Smith, Logan Dellinger, and Nelson Hunsucker families. The logging operation was teamwork at its best. The log cutting crew was normally Coyte Sigmon and Gaither Yount on the two-man chain saw or cross-cut saw. The logs were then measured by Carl Yount. Guy Hollar was usually present to do the wedging and prying, and D. A. Yount and Caswell Baker normally trimmed back the limbs. The younger boys, including A. C. Yount, Jr., Hugh Yount, Glen Baker, and others, did whatever they could in the woods. Jake Workman, Roy Eckard, and many others also helped when schedule permitted. In the roughlands, teams of horses pulled the logs up to the logging road. On more open terrain, a cut down truck, or "hot dog" pulled out the logs. They were then man-handled up ramps onto the farm trucks owned by G. E. Hollar, Jr., L. A. Yount, Jr., Earl Baker, Glenn Smith, Lee Cline, Marion Cline, and others. G. E. Hollar, Jr. was in charge of the hauling operations. The timber was then hauled to the sawmills of Lee Cline and Earl Baker.³⁴

A few good trees were discovered on some property near Rock Barn Road. Ultra-conservative J. K. Smith was approached for a donation, and he volunteered twelve trees. Some thought he should have been more generous. When the time came to cut these trees, something in the forest went awry, as none of the twelve selected trees ever hit the ground, but became entangled in the mass of limbs of neighboring trees. These twelve leaning trees would never be of benefit to St. John's as it was now too dangerous to attempt to work up the logs. Pastor Summers visited the forest, and was not very happy that these experienced loggers could make such a mess that wasted these trees -- until he noticed a wry grin or twinkle of an eye. He discretely left the dilemma in the hands of the woodsmen. Eventually, it required the sawing of ten or twelve more trees to bring the first twelve to the ground. All were incorporated into the new church, and Smith never said a word of complaint (although it is highly probable that he instructed some of the younger loggers how to avoid this type of catastrophe in the future).³⁵

A nice grove of Red Oak was harvested from Doud Smith's property just west of the Church, and a group of White Oak trees, between Conover and Claremont. After sawing, drying, and dressing by C. G. Fox Lumber Company, the Red Oak was incorporated into the floor of the Nave, and the White Oak, on the floor of the Parish Hall.³⁶

30. *Ibid. Conversations.*

31. *Summers.*

32. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 227. *Summers.*

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 226. *Summers. Gaither Yount Notes.* Mr. Yount was instructed to keep an accounting of the timber, and was a member of the logging operations. These notes came from his records.

35. *Conversations.*

36. *Ibid.*

The trusses over the Nave required special attention. Needed were 2 x 14's of a length of twenty-eight feet, which requires a large Pine tree. "The two biggest trees in Alexander County" were purchased, with diameter so great that a long cross-cut saw would not cut completely through them. Finally, they were felled, cut to length, and laboriously loaded--with nearly half the length hanging off the back of the truck. As the truck left the forest with a single log, the truck's front end was lifted from the ground at bumps or rough places in the road.³⁷

When the logs got to the mills, Earl Baker was one of the sawyers, with Philip Baker doing most of the docking. At Lee Cline's sawmill, Dowd Smith did most of the log docking. Additional workers who unloaded, milled, and hacked the lumber came forth as the need arose, under the "lumber hacking crew" of Jake Workman and Bill Rockett. These operations continued for several weeks, and the weeks turned to months. Pastor Summers visited the forests and the sawmills regularly to provide his encouragement. The octogenarians of the congregation were often present to offer their sage supervision. The amount of lumber sawed at each mill was estimated at 125 thousand board feet -- or a total of **ONE QUARTER MILLION BOARD FEET!!!**³⁸

When crushed stone (gravel) was required, the farm trucks went out again, with different side-boards and tail-gates, and hauled the material from the Punch Quarry (later Martin-Marietta) near Hickory to the site.³⁹

The brick came from Johnson City, Tennessee. When brick arrived via railroad on a box-car at the sidetrack near the Conover Depot (then on Main Street), a crew was placed at the side-track to unload, three trucks were continuously in transit, and a crew was ready to unload at the destination. A church member who remembers the loading crew may have exaggerated its efficiency slightly when he boasted that a truck could be loaded in 15 minutes. But loading those trucks was a mission, and expediency was necessary under the circumstances. On one occasion, three boxcars were unloaded in a single day.⁴⁰

If the new Church did not become a reality, it would not be due to shortcomings in effort. Meanwhile, about a twelve to sixteen foot section of the "Hut" was sawed off to make room for the new sanctuary, and a temporary endwall constructed. In August of 1950, the "Hut" was sold at public auction, relocated to Rock Barn Road, and converted to residential purposes.⁴¹

Church life continued, with Walther League meetings at the homes of W. L. Rockett, Bessie Hunsucker (Ingle), Sue Evelyn Baker (Hunsucker), C. L. Baker, Johnny Smith, A. C. Yount, Irene Baker (Campbell) and Lorene Baker (Hunsucker), Coyte Sigmon, and the "Hut." The Ladies' Aid had another Bake Sale at Rowe's Store, followed by an Ice Cream Supper on Glenn Smith's lawn. Building Committee meetings were held on the average of twice per month, at various homes, including C. D. Sigman, Sr., Glenn Smith, and Gaither Yount. Building and Finance Committee reports were regularly presented to congregational meetings, held after Sunday School on the first Sunday of each month. L. L. L., the choirs, and Sunday School Teachers met regularly in various houses. Sermons continued with motivational and reassuring messages such as "commitment," "sacrifice," and "the glory of God."⁴²

Numerous Committees were appointed. Clarence Smith and Coyte Sigmon were appointed as a committee to curtail the shortfall of the lumber needs for the Church. A window committee was appointed, with Carl Yount and W. G. Dellinger in charge. Pastor Summers and Wayne Smith were on the committee to repair and place the cross. The Pastor, Berman E. Smith, and Roy Eckard composed the Chancel Committee, an important one, since these items of built-in furniture were not included in the contract with Bumgarner Construction. Another committee was called the Chancel Furnishings Committee, and it consisted of Mrs. W. L. Rockett, Mrs. W. G. Dellinger, Mrs. Roy Eckard, Mrs. H. L. Yount, and Mrs. Gordon Simmons. Other committees were appointed, and nearly the entire congregation was on one committee or another.⁴³

37. *Ibid.* The film, taken by Moon Mullins, and purchased by the L. L. L. shows the handling and hauling of these tremendous logs, hereinafter referenced *Mullins Film*.

38. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 225. *Summers. Conversations. Gaither Yount Notes. Mullins Film.*

39. *Conversations.*

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid. Summers.*

42. *Ibid.*

43. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 227. *Summers.*

Another touching gift came from the Dorcas Society of Concordia, who recognized St. John's choirs' need for new robes, and offered \$225.00 for this purpose. This was no small gesture in 1950!⁴⁴

By September, estimates had been received for the chancel furnishings, and members could participate by purchase of any of these items, but not the altar! The altar was given special significance, and was to be purchased by every man, woman, and child of St. John's.

The Altar - purchased by the congregation.
 The Pulpit - ca. \$250
 The Lectern - ca. \$100
 The Crucifix - \$120 to \$200
 The Candle Sticks - Three pairs needed - \$100-\$120 per pair.
 The Communion Candle Sticks - \$80 to \$120.
 The Vases - No price yet
 The Missal Stand - \$30 to \$60
 The Baptism Font - (Already pledged)
 The Chancel Chairs - two needed - \$60 each
 The Lectionary (book for Lectern) - \$30
 The Liturgy - Book for Altar - \$30
 The Pulpit Lamp (Already pledged)
 The Lectern Lamp (No price as yet)
 The Altar Hangings - Will report later.⁴⁵

The gifts from "outsiders" were still forthcoming, including an additional \$922.00 from individuals. Financial participation from other Churches further encouraged the membership:

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church	\$210.03
Dorcas Society (Memm.-J. D. Bolick)	\$ 10.00
Fair Grove M. E. Church	\$ 60.00
Our Savior Lutheran Ch. (Raleigh)	\$ 25.00
Womans Missionary League Christ Church, Hickory	\$100.00
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church	\$252.05
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Ridgeway, N. C.	\$ 38.0046

More corporate support was also received:

Old Dominion Box Factory	\$ 10
Conover Lumber Company	\$10047

The congregation was also requested to make an initial cash contribution at an early date. Personal visitations were made to the membership for cash or pledges, with the suggestion that 6% of the 1950 yearly income was "a very appropriate amount," and should be paid by January 1, 1951. Loans were requested from members at no interest or a very low rate. The members were further requested to provide individual notes as security for any other funds that must be borrowed.⁴⁸

To emphasize that routine Church activities must go on, a St. John's "Work Day" was held on September 30, not to work on the Church or parsonage, but to beautify the cemetery. After a hard day's work, they were treated to the delicious food at a Ladies' Aid steak supper, held at the Legion Building that night, with cost per

44. *Ibid.*

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.*

47. *Ibid.*

48. *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 228-229.

plate at \$1.25. The reader, if he's ever had the pleasure of a St. John's Ladies' Aid supper, surely must be getting hungry.⁴⁹

An important Building Committee Meeting was held at Glenn Smith's house in October, and a representative from a light fixture company, Anderson Electric of Charlotte, was present. The committee agreed with a few modifications, and fixtures were soon ordered.⁵⁰

In December, another Bake Sale was held by the Ladies' Aid, at General Hardware and Paint Co., in Conover. Through no fault of effort, there was a timber shortage on the construction projects. Special work was required, and the men assembled, under the supervision of Guy Hollar on the Tuesday after Christmas to cut, haul, and saw up the remaining wood required. This was successful, and both saw-mills resumed operation.⁵¹

Another unexpected donation materialized from Concordia's Ladies' Aid to that of St. John's - \$100.00. The ladies in Conover recognized the efforts of their sisters, relatives, and neighbors to the North, and continued their generosity.⁵²

A joint Thanksgiving service was held with Concordia congregation. Also, the joint New Year's Eve service celebrated the beginning of the year 1951. Thankfully, one construction project was finally about finished. On January 10th, Pastor Summers moved into his new house, with the following comment:

It is a beautiful home indeed and the congregation can feel justly delighted to have such a residence for a parsonage. It will serve your pastors and families well for generations to come.⁵³

The Pastor had been moved into his new house with considerable help from members of the Congregation, and another use for several of the farm trucks, possibly with an entirely different set of side-boards and tail-gates.⁵⁴

Beginning in late 1950, the St. John's Congregation moved their regular services and Sunday School to the basement of Concordia School. Although the parsonage was offered for Walther League Meetings, they apparently preferred the make-shift routine, and soon thereafter, meetings returned to other St. John's homes, such as that of Phyllis Hunsucker (Barnett), Dorothy Brady (Workman) and Mabel Brady, Johnny Smith, and Glenn Baker. The first few Lenten services of 1951 were held jointly upon invitation of Concordia.⁵⁵

In January 1951, the Sunday School undertook to purchase the chairs for the new Parish Hall, and later, the Sunday School used lumber in the "Hut" to construct tables.⁵⁶

In late February:

HERE IS THE ANNOUNCEMENT YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING TO HEAR. IF THE LORD IS WILLING, WE SHALL WORSHIP IN ST. JOHN'S PARISH HALL NEXT SUNDAY MORNING. SURELY, GOD IS GOOD TO ALL OF US.

TRULY A DAY AND TIME OF REJOICING.⁵⁷

On March 4th, less than one year after the fire, the Parish Hall portion of the Church building was complete, and for the next several months, it was well appreciated and well used beyond its original design purpose. In addition to Sunday School and Church, it was used for the various other activities that had been heretofore scattered to the various homes in the congregation, Rowe's Store, the Legion hall, the "round-house", St. Peter's,

49. *Summers.*

50. *Ibid.*

51. *Ibid.*

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Summers. Conversations.*

55. *Summers.* This author was baptized by Pastor Summers in the basement of Concordia School, according to conversations with Ila Smith, 1993.

56. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 235.

57. *Summers.*

and last and most important, Concordia Church. The Elders and Deacons, along with Pastor Summers, wrote a letter of appreciation to Concordia congregation.⁵⁸

Later that month, appreciation of Pastor Summers's efforts were made known, as his family was "pounded" by the congregation -- And not a vegetable would have been growing in anyone's garden at the end of March!⁵⁹

Several special events marked "firsts" for the new building. On Easter Sunday, March 25, the infant daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Berman E. Smith (Karen Delora Smith) and the infant son of Mr. & Mrs. Johnson Hoke (Stephen Hoke) were baptized. This was the first use of the new baptismal font. On this occasion, Junior Hefner and Thomas Wallace renewed their baptismal vows through confirmation.⁶⁰

In April, amid its own trials, congregational benevolence to the neighbors was shown, as an offering for the burn-out victims, Mr. & Mrs. Glenn Brown, was collected and delivered. The Altar Fund project was running behind in cash, the Ladies Aid had another of their regular Bake Sales, and the workers at St. John's spent their time improving the conditions of the cemetery.⁶¹

Soon it became apparent that construction in the Sanctuary might be completed without furniture and finishing of the chancel. Delays! Delays! Delays!⁶²

In June, several notices went forth. The "Altar Fund is incomplete", "windows have been installed, make payments," "work day next Saturday", and "finishing chancel furniture will hold up dedication." But mixed with these was Pastor Summers' relentless encouragement. "People continue to give much favorable comment on the fine work the people at St. John's have done in the rebuilding under the trying conditions we faced."⁶³

The pungent smell of the lacquer permeated the Parish Hall at the July 1 services, and the helter-skelter processes of construction, fund-raising, and Church routine reached its climax:

The new church is closed today because of the freshness of the floor finish. The pews will in all probability be delivered this week. We have the word that the chancel furniture will be ready and installed in good time. DEDICATION DAY tentatively set for August 12th, Second Sunday in August seems safe enough and our planning will now be with the twelfth of August in mind. . . . Much cleaning about the Church building and grounds must be done. . . . The cemetery needs attention frequently. . . . The organ installation will be pushed ahead in the next few days. . . . There are still a window here and there to be had. . . . The window over the front door was taken last Sunday. . . . Two excellent memorial windows [that can] still be had are those top windows to be found in the Transept [sic], \$65 each. . . . The Altar Fund is still incomplete: Check up to see whether or not you belong to the list of contributors. If not, remember our slogan: Every man, woman and child in St. John's Church - A contributor to the Altar Fund. . . . After service today. Regular Congregational Meeting. Men, the business of the Church is your business, and He wants Christian men to devote time and talent thereto. . . . The Ladies' Aid Society meets after service today. There is much work to do and the best effort of every member is needed. . . . Dedication of the new Chapel at Camp Linn Haven takes place this afternoon at 3:30 o'clock, and a fine attendance is expected. . . . At Linn Haven this week - Family Week. If you can do so, come up for a week, a few days, or even a day. Welcome awaits you at Linn Haven Camp.⁶⁴

The following week, July 8:

Church pews to be delivered on Monday of this week and a working is called for every evening after working hours and every night in order to place the pews.⁶⁵

And on July 15th and 22nd: "We are glad to see the work moving toward finishing the new church." "Work evening and night, every night at the church." "Ladies' Aid Ice Cream Social next Saturday Night."⁶⁶

58. *Church Minute Book II*, p. 235.

59. *Summers*.

60. *Ibid. Conversations*.

61. *Summers*.

62. *Ibid.*

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Ibid.*

65. *Ibid.*

66. *Ibid.*

On the following Sunday, the long-awaited announcement was made:

DEDICATION DATE HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED TO OUR NEIGHBORING CONGREGATIONS AND FRIENDS. Much work is yet to be done in order to complete final preparations. **WILLING HANDS APPEAR NIGHTLY AND ON SATURDAY AND THE LORD WILLING ALL WILL BE READY.** Altar is finished.⁶⁷

The "willing hands" came to the forefront, and the remaining work was performed admirably. The dedication would go on as scheduled, and anticipation had reached fever pitch. On dedication weekend, a social was held on Friday night, and former-Pastors Smith, Rockett, and Haase were present for the fun and good food.⁶⁸

On August 12, 1951, the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity, doors to the Sanctuary were closed. Sunday school was conducted in the Parish Hall and the Classrooms. At 10:45, everybody assembled on the lawn in front of the church. The bell was rung with enthusiasm, and could be heard for miles. It invited all neighbors to come to the **NEW ST. JOHN'S CHURCH!** What a beautiful sound it was!⁶⁹

The doors to the Church were opened with ceremony, and the deservedly-proud Congregation entered their new Church to the glorious sounds from the Wickes pipe organ. Voices rang forth processional hymn number 246, "Holy, Holy, Holy." Professor Smith, who had first delivered a message from the pulpit of St. John's fifty-two years earlier, offered the sermon, "Rejoicing in the worship of the same God in a new Church." The choir followed with a stirring rendition of "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty." Pastor Rockett then presented a second sermon to the attentive audience, "The Living Temple of God." Holy Communion was administered by Pastors Haase, Rockett, Smith, and Summers. After the Benediction, the perfectly-selected recessional hymn was number 36, "Now Thank We All Our God."⁷⁰

The festive Dedication Ceremony was held at 3:00 that same afternoon, after a bountiful feast and much socialization in the shade of the trees. The Dedication Program bore the message of thanks from Pastor Summers:

AUGUST, 1951

Dear Members of St. John's -- Fellow-members in Christ:

It is a joy to greet you this happy day of Dedication of our new Church and Parish Hall. I do so with a deep sense of gratitude to our loving Heavenly Father from whom cometh down "every good gift and every perfect gift" and by whose grace and love this day is made possible. I greet you also with a deep sense of gratitude to all of you for the devotions you have shown in so many ways in the construction and equipping of this fine new church. Especially are you to be commended for your sacrifice and devotion since this is the second church built within three years. Truly you are God's people: you are the "salt of the earth".

We are gratefully happy today and we will not rest on our laurels. In the days ahead we shall not forget that is God "from whom all blessings are from" and devote ourselves wholeheartedly to the work of the church at home and abroad so that we may rightly be a light set on a hill declaring the blessings of salvation through the merit and sacrifice of Jesus, Our Saviour "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His Grace."

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." God bless you abundantly and use you effectively throughout your lives in His service and to His glory.

Your Pastor,

JAMES L. SUMMERS⁷¹

The service surely sent a chill up the spine of every person in attendance. It included "Christ, Thou art the sure Foundation" as the Hymn of Invocation, followed by a vocal selection performed by Mrs. James L. (Mary) Summers, entitled "Open the Gates of the Temple." After prayer, the Church was dedicated "To the glory and

67. *Ibid.*

68. *Ibid.*

69. *Ibid.*

70. *Dedication Program*, copies were also included with the Summers bulletins. *Summers*.

71. *Dedication Program*. The remainder of the details of this service come from this source.

honor of Thee, the Triune God. Father. Son. and Holy Ghost." To which, the congregation responded in resounding voice,

WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH!

The choir anthem was Martin Luther's hymn of the reformation, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." The dedication sermon was delivered by Rev. Edwin E. Pieplow, "From Ashes To A Living Fire Through the Power and Presence of Christ," and was based on the perfectly-selected text from Psalms 118:23-25:

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity.

During the offertory, Irene Baker played one of her all-time favorites, and favorite of the Congregation (and this author) -- Johann Sebastian Bach's, "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." The Recessional Hymn was appropriately selected:

1. The Lord hath helped me hitherto
By His surpassing favor;
His mercies ev'ry mom were new,
His kindness did not waver.
God hitherto hath been my Guide,
Hath pleasures hitherto supplied,
And hitherto has helped me.
2. I praise and thank Thee, Lord, my God.
For Thine abundant blessing
Which here-to-for Thou hast bestowed
And I am still possessing.
Inscribe this on my memory:
The Lord hath done great things for me
And graciously hath helped me.
3. Help me henceforth, O God of grace,
Help me on each occasion,
Help me in each and ev'ry place,
Help me thro' Jesus' passion;
Help me in life and death, O God,
Help me thro' Jesus dying blood;
Help me as Thou hast helped me! Amen.

As Irene played Beethoven's "The Heavens Declare His Glory," the ceremony concluded, and the crowd departed with jubilation, solemnity, and full satisfaction that the job was well-done.

Each and every member of the audience that day felt great pride at the remarkable achievements of building two churches and a parsonage in about three years. Many glanced back, as they drove to their homes, to make sure that the cross on the bell tower had been straightened, and once again was the most prominent feature of the skyline. It proudly displayed the message of Christ the crucified by day and night for miles around.⁷²

Not enough can possibly be said of the courage and determination of the St. John's congregation during these trials and victories, from March of 1950 to September 1951. Any passing comment regarding the community's support for their friends at St. John's seems trivial. At risk of boredom, each donation except pledges from the membership is listed, as published in the dedication program or from the personal notes of Mr. Gaither Yount, Building Committee Member.

72. *Conversations. Mullins Film.*

THE OFFICIAL FAMILY

PASTOR

Reverend James L. Summers

THE BOARD OF ELDERS

M. Glenn Smith C. D. Sigman, Sr.
Coyte Sigmon

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

(Trustees)

Vance Hollar Cecil Baker

THE CHURCH COUNCIL

L. A. Yount, President Coyte Hunsucker, Secretary
Harry L. Yount, Treasurer
Bob Bolliger, Financial Secretary
M. Glenn Smith C. D. Sigman, Sr. Coyte Sigmon
Vance Hollar Cecil Baker

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Vance Hollar Cecil Baker L. A. Yount
Bob Bolliger Harry Lee Yount Harvie Sigmon

SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFICERS

Berman E. Smith, Supt. Wayne Smith, Asst. Supt.
Harvie Sigmon, Secretary-Treasurer
A. C. Yount, Jr., Asst. Secretary-Treasurer

IN APPRECIATION

Architect	Glenn Yount, Newton, N. C.
Contractors	Bumgarner Construction Company, Conover, N. C.
Plumbing and Heating	G. A. Thomason & Sons, Hickory, N. C.
Electrical Work	Bumgarner Electric Company, Hickory, N. C.
Lighting Fixtures	Anderson Electric Company, Charlotte, N. C.
Church Furnishings	Southern Desk Co., Hickory, N. C.
Floors	C. G. Fox Lumber Company, Hickory, N. C.
Mill Work	Herman-Sipe & Company, Conover, N. C.
Windows	High Point Art Glass & Decorating Company, High Point, N. C.
Organ	Wicks Organ Company, F. W. Moehlmann, Conover, N. C.
Dedication Booklet	Conover Printing, Conover, N. C.

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

Altar	St. John's Congregation
Pulpit	Mr. and Mrs. D. F. Smith
Lectern	Mr. and Mrs. Lee Cline
Altar Railing	Mr. and Mrs. Guy Smith
Crucifix	Mrs. Howard Baker, Relatives and Friends
Six Candle-Sticks	Mrs. P. M. Dellinger and Friends of P. M. Dellinger
Missal Stand	Mr. and Mrs. Claude E. Sigmon
Bell	Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Smith
Dossal Curtain and Guest Register	St. John's Walther League

Organ	St. John's Ladies Aid
Baptism Foot	Mr. and Mrs. Berman Smith
Choir Robes	St. John's Senior and Junior Choirs, Concordia Dorcas Society, Maiden Sales Co.
Hymn Boards	Gaither Yount and Coyte Signon
Clergy Chairs	Mrs. Garland A. Arndt
Cross on Tower	St. John's Walther League
Candle Lighters	Mrs. Nye Parkhurst and Children
Vases and Stands	Mr. and Mrs. Carl Yount
Alms Basins	Mrs. Robert Taylor

WINDOWS

In Honor of J. K. Smith	By the Children
In Memory of Mrs. J. K. Smith	By the Children
In Honor of Professor Carroll O. Smith	By St. John's Congregation
In Honor of Mr. and Mrs. D. F. Smith	By the Children
In Honor of Mr. and Mrs. Clarence A. Smith	By the Children
In Memory of W. Elcanie Hollar and Florence Yount Hollar	By the Children
In Honor of Guy E. Hollar, Sr., and Pearl Sigman Hollar	By the Children
In Memory of Philo Elmore Isenhower	By Mrs. Anna Isenhower Mauney
In Memory of Margaret Stine Isenhower	By Mrs. Anna Isenhower Mauney
In Memory of Mrs. Eugene Baker	By Eugene Baker
In Memory of J. Philip Baker and Mrs. Emeline Hoke Baker	By the Children
In Memory of B. Elmore Smith	By the Children
In Memory of Sallie A. Smith	By the Children
In Memory of Burton S. Cline	By the Children
In Memory of Linnie C. Cline	By the Children
In Memory of Mrs. R. L. Rockett	By R. L. Rockett & Family
In Memory of John Heffner	By Mrs. John Heffner
In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson E. Sigman	By C. Detleve Sigman Sr. Family
In Memory of D. P. Dellinger	By Mrs. D. P. Dellinger
In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Yount	By the Children
In Memory of Howard G. Baker	By Mrs. Howard Baker, Relatives and Friends
In Memory of Bessie Beard Yount	By the Children
In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. N. E. Brady	By Brothers and Sisters
In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Yount, Sr.	By Mr. and Mrs. James Simmons and Mrs. W. E. Brown
In Memory of Mrs. D. A. Yount	By the Children
In Honor of D. A. Yount	By the Children
In Memory of Geitner R. and Wade B. Simmons	By Mr. and Mrs. P. B. Simmons
In Memory of P. M. Dellinger	By Mr. and Mr. W. G. Dellinger and Kathleen By Friends
In Memory of Mrs. Carrie Henkel Cline	By Mr. and Mrs. Harvie Signon
In Memory of Walter L. Signon	By Mr. and Mrs. Glenn Smith
Chancel Window	By D. A. Yount
Transept Window	

CASH GIFTS TOTALING \$7,258.97 WERE RECEIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING CHURCHES, INSTITUTIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

H. W. Mechaffey, L. C. Cornwall, Miss Lillie Mae Jones, Mrs. Loma Matheson, Charley Garnt, Rex Reynolds, Rev. B. H. Hemmeyer, Craig Herman, Lester Harbinson, George Powell, L. W. Corriher, Herman Dagenhardt, Fred Sipe, Mrs. A. H. Crowell, Mr. and Mrs. Luther Sipe, Helen Smith, N. H. Kruse, Mrs. Karen K. Summers, J. W. Matherson, Gordon Wilson, Andrew Signon, Jimmy Morrow, Johnny Coulter, Dwight Self, Woodrow Hill, Ross V. Alley, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Yount, J. H. Shook, Geo. K. Bost, N. M. Newton, Mr. and

Mrs. Signey Propst, M. H. Yount, Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Yount, E. L. Moose, Marshall E. Cline, Mrs. Clyde McGee, Mrs. Lillie Lackey, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Sigmon, G. G. Mitchell, Mrs. John C. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Wade Smith, Mrs. E. V. Little, R. G. Watts, Lafayette Riskett, R. M. Anderson, M. A. Austin, Mrs. Hazel Eckard, "A Friend", Dr. Clyde E. Mingus, F. G. Harper, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Barringer, Rev. Wade D. Yount, Harry R. Drum, Lock Isenhower, Mrs. G. G. Ludwig, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Witherspoon, Ralph Ballard, Rena Kanipe, S. E. Setzer, Ernest E. Whisnant, W. L. Duncan, Mr. and Mrs. Eulan Sigmon, James Walters, Oscar C. Smith, Mrs. Mertie Sigmon, Jesse Eckard, Rev. and Mrs. William von Spreckelsen, Mrs. Fred P. Sigmon, John Hollar, Mr. and Mrs. Ross Matheson and A. H. Borgstede.

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mount Olive Lutheran Church Walther League, Concordia Lutheran Church, Trinity Evangelical Reformed Church, Conover, N. C., First Presbyterian Church, Newton, N. C., Christ Lutheran Church L. W. M. L., St. Peter's Lutheran Church Ladies Aid, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, St. Paul's Lutheran Church - Ridgeway, N. C., Calvary Lutheran Church, Bethel Lutheran Church, Mt. Zion Lutheran Church, Concordia Lutheran Church Dorcas Society, Fairgrove Methodist Church, Our Savior Lutheran Church - Raleigh, N. C.

Warlong Glove Mfg. Co., Conover, N. C., Employees Southern Furniture Company, Conover, N. C., Employees Newton Glove Mill, Newton, N. C., American Trust Co., Charlotte, N. C., Old Dominion Box Co., Conover, N. C., Conover Lumber Co., Conover, N. C., Broyhill Furniture Co., Lenoir, N. C., Herman-Sipe Co., Conover, N. C., Robertson Chemical Corp., Statesville, N. C., High Point Art Glass and Decorative Co., High Point, N. C.

TIMBER DONATIONS73

Mr. Eugene Baker	11,000 ft.
Mr. Earl Baker	1,800 ft.
Mr. Caswell Baker	600 ft.
Mr. Perry Lafone	2,200 ft.
Mr. Lee Cline	13,000 ft.
Mr. Marion Cline	(bought by church) 9,000 ft.
Mr. Wade Hoke	(bought by church) 3,000 ft.
Mr. Claud Sigmon	1,000 ft.
Mr. Herbert Dellinger	1,800 ft.
Mrs. David Dellinger	1,000 ft.
Mr. Guy Hollar, Sr.	2,200 ft.
Mr. Dewey Hunsucker	1,500 ft.
Mr. Lee Rockett	10,000 ft.
Mrs. Dwight Self	1,800 ft.
Mrs. Charles Sigmon	1,200 ft.
Mr. Baxter Simmons	2,000 ft.
Mr. James Simmons	3,000 ft.
Rev. C. O. Smith	10,000 ft.
Mr. Clarence Smith	15,000 ft.
Mr. Doud Smith	20,000 ft.
Mrs. Doud Smith	5,500 ft.
Mr. Guy Smith	700 ft.
Mr. Herbert Smith	12,000 ft.
Mr. John Smith	3,000 ft.
Mr. Oliver Smith	700 ft.
Mr. Wade Smith	4,000 ft.
Mrs. Catherine Warren	1,000 ft.
Mr. Colon Yount	300 ft.
Mr. Carl Yount	2,400 ft.
Mr. D. A. Yount	6,000 ft.
Mr. Gaither Yount	1,800 ft.

Mr. W. L. Yount Est.
St. John's Church Property:
Mill Right Property

400 ft.
10,000 ft.
35,000 ft.

Certainly, the heroes of this incredible story were many. But three entities stand forth above the others as shining examples for all Christians -- Pastor James L. Summers, whose ministerial guidance, calm and persistent motivation, and organizational abilities are recognized by all; Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church, who graciously sacrificed their Church routine for about one year to assist, in every possible way, their friends and neighbors to the north; and

THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION OF ST. JOHN'S!

Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Psalms 127:1

And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good. . . . Genesis 1:31



Present church building
completed in 1951



Building and Finance Committee for St. John's Church and Parsonage 1951

1st Row: Eugene Baker, Dowd Smith

2nd Row: Gaither Yount, Lee Cline, Vance Hollar, Detleve Sigmon Sr., Carl Yount,
Rev. J. L. Summers, L. A. Yount, Glenn Smith

HICKORY DAILY RECORD, HICKORY, N. C.

Pioneer Spirit Is Revived



The spirit of those pioneer fathers is being shown by members of St. John's Lutheran church near Canton, Ala. In a scene a group of men had a party in the midst of trees, trees and labor to produce lumber for the proposed new eight-room parsonage. Those in the picture are Glenn Smith and Lee Cline, squalling in front, standing, left to right, Every Lafon, D. A. Yount, D. F. Smith, C. B. Stewart, J. H. Smith, Gay Sigmon, Rev. J. L. Summers, pastor of St. John's. Eugene Baker, Vance Hollar, Carl Yount and Gay Sigmon on top of the lumber. Lee Cline, Yount and Gay Sigmon. At the bottom is shown the log yard and workers as they went about the task of moving and cutting the logs. Some hoop-protected trees were cut to provide lumber for the project.

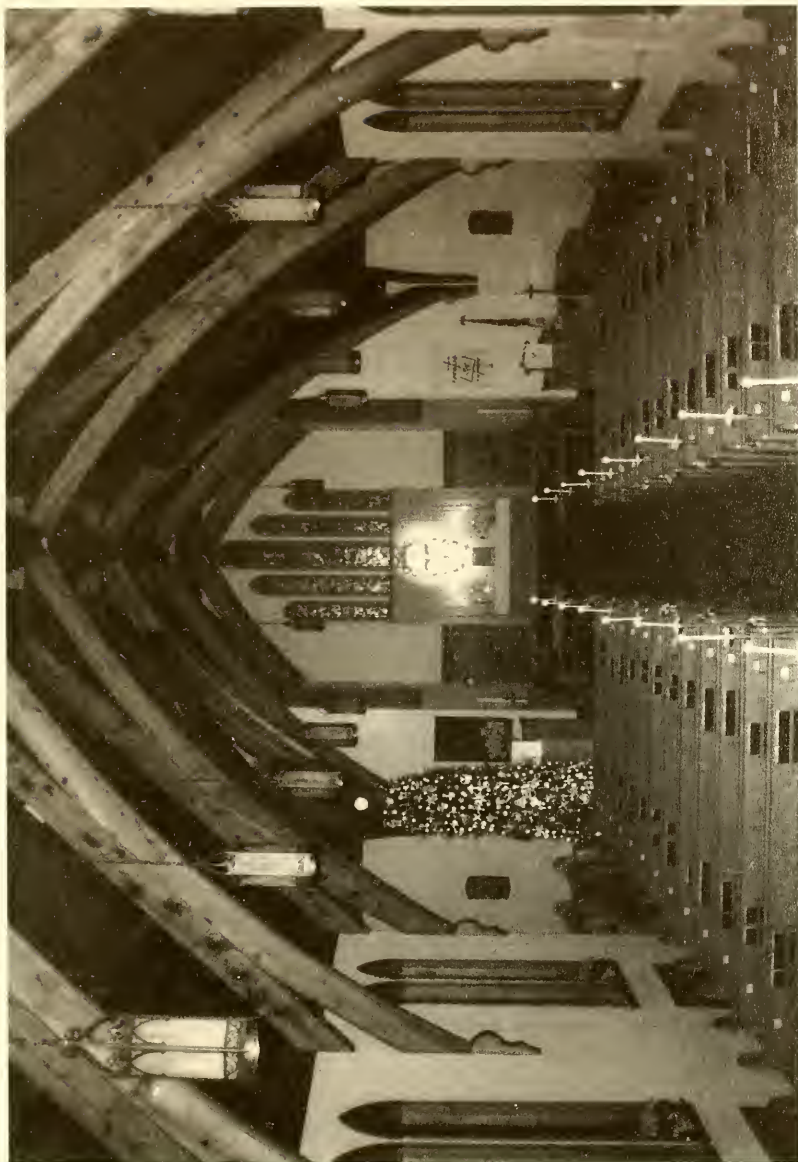
Newspaper article concerning cutting of the timber for St. John's Parsonage 1953



Interior of 1951 church before carpet



Stained glass window in 1951 church given by Glenn and Ila Smith



Christmas scene of interior of 1951 church

SEND NOW PROSPERITY

One generation shall praise thy mighty works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. Psalms 145:4.

The title of this chapter is taken from the text of Rev. Pieplow's dedication sermon of the new St. John's church building. The prayers were heard. Although the road was not always as smooth as the new Interstate 40 being planned within sight of the bell tower, the dedication of the new church began an era of general peace, prosperity, and consistency that St. John's had rarely experienced.

While the new I-40 highway and other good paved roads made travel easier, St. John's was still a rural Church steeped in family tradition, as most of the travel, migration, and formation of new congregations still tended towards the towns and cities. Residential subdivisions in Clines Township were rare in the year 1950, so a new concentration of people was not present. Suburbanization had not occurred northward from Conover, although the town limits had grown in other directions. When the Interstate's path was cut, the expansion from Conover towards St. John's was cut off. Growth moved East, West, and South -- but not North until quite some time later.

The area north of Hickory, Conover, Claremont, and Catawba was still a predominantly Lutheran stronghold, with just a few congregations of other denominations having constructed churches. The towns of Catawba County were quite different in religious persuasion, although the town limits of Conover still only had two church buildings in 1950 -- Concordia and Trinity.

The Church dedication festival was a great success, and over \$1,000 more was gained for the Building Fund. Unlike the church that burned, there remained some debt on the new building and parsonage.

The first class of Janice Simmons, Bethie Jean Smith, and Nancy Yount was confirmed in the new Sanctuary two weeks after dedication, August 26, 1951. On the same day, Charles Robert Bollinger was the first child baptized in the new sanctuary. At the fall Southeastern District L. L. L. meeting, Berman Smith was elected president, and William L. Rockett, Board Member.¹

St. John's wasted no time in showing off its new facility, as it hosted about eighty pastors at the Southeastern District Pastoral Conference October 16-18, 1951. Public worship services were held on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday night. "Pastors one and all were very favorably impressed by the appearance of our new church and its accommodations which so adequately took care of the conference needs for sessions, also for committee meetings and services." Naturally, the ladies were commended for providing "such tasty meals" and "hospitality" during these sessions.²

On the following Saturday, a special auction was held for the lot next to the parsonage. This sale was open to members only, and the high bid was not accepted by the congregation. One of the "outdoor toilets" was also auctioned, as it had been rendered obsolete by porcelain fixtures in the new building.³

At the annual Harvest Home service, much food was collected. This was then donated to the parochial school at Concordia for their kind permission to use their facilities before the new church was completed. Principal Harry R. Voight responded with a kind letter of thanks.⁴

As the tumultuous and triumphant year of 1951 drew to a close, the congregational activities and church business had begun to settle into a regular routine, complete with traditional Christmas and New Year's Eve services at "home." During Fall 1951 and Spring 1952, the congregation was visited on several occasions by

¹ Summers. RCC: This chapter was not footnoted by Mark. I used his notes to create the footnotes herein.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

supply pastors, including C. O. Smith, St. Stephen's vicar Art Ledebuhr, Carl A. Koerber, and William von Spreckelsen.⁵

A few more items for the new church were obtained, including about one hundred new hymnals, special lighting for the chancel windows, and a P. A. system. At the parsonage, exterior shrubbery and landscaping were added.⁶

During Holy Week of 1952, the joint choirs of St. Peter's, Bethel, Christ, and St. John's presented a series of concerts at each church, and the one at St. John's was held at on the night of Easter Sunday.⁷

As Summer approached, eyes were turned towards wholesome Christian fellowship:

Barbecue Scheduled:

Have you heard? A gift of the necessary "porkers" by our fellow members, Glenn Smith and Lee Cline, all properly barbecued by folks who know how: Made ready for serving by our own ladies who know how: And all of all of us to eat -- and we know how. When? Mark your calendar now. Date: May 10th at St. John's. Get your ticket early and tell all our neighbors and friends. We want you here. We want them here. Come!⁸

Vacation Bible School was held during the summer, and the pupils and their parents were treated to a Ladies Aid ice cream supper on Saturday night.⁹

When Pastor Summers was appointed "Visiting Pastor" of the Circuit consisting of eleven congregations, he was absent frequently from St. John's. The supply pastors included Edwin Pieplow, Dr. William Arndt, C. O. Smith, von Spreckelsen, and Mt. Olive seminary student, Martin Luther Travis.¹⁰

The Anniversary celebration was held on August 31, and a drive was made to reduce the debt of the church by \$10,000 during the calendar year. Former pastor O. W. H. Lindemeyer served as guest speaker for the occasion. Several personal notes were canceled by their owners, others were reduced, and over \$1,100 was collected at a special "debt reduction offering." When the Ladies Aid offered a tasty ham supper in August, some of the men, Elon Keisler, Walter Keisler, and Joe Witherspoon countered with a fresh catfish and hush puppy dinner in September, with the \$200.00 proceeds to go towards debt. Homecoming was held in September, with Pastor Rockett as guest speaker, and the special offering yielded nearly another \$1,000.¹¹ The congregation continued to work with great vigor to get out of debt entirely.

During the week of Thanksgiving, the ladies, "artists in the field of preparing delicious dinners," held a special outing for the youth on Friday, and followed this with the "Ladies Annual Dinner" on Saturday.

In January 1953, the congregation was saddened by the death of former Pastor George E. Mennen, who had retired from the ministry several years earlier. A memorial in his behalf was placed into Concordia's Building Fund.¹²

In early spring, much improvement work was done in and around the church, with the planting of grass and painting of the basement rooms. Two work days were held. The final "outside toilet" was sold.¹³

On Palm Sunday, March 29, 1953, a large class of seventeen was confirmed, and Dewey Clyde Hunsucker was accepted into membership through confession of faith. On April 12, memorial chimes were dedicated to the glory of God, in memory of Henry C. Cline, as presented to the church by Mrs. Cline and her daughter, Mrs. John Mull. Cline was remembered as a great financial benefactor to the congregation, and often was the one who kicked off fund-raising projects through his generous donations.¹⁴

During the summer, Pastor Summers took several trips on his circuit and the pulpit was supplied by a variety of pastors, vicars, and seminary students. The Catawba County Churches were approached to participate in "Project CROP," and donate wheat for the needy, with an anticipated goal of one boxcar load. Over 5,300 pounds

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Church Minute Book II*, p. 243.

⁷ *Summers.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Church Minute Book II*, p. 251.

¹⁴ *Summers.*

(or nearly 90 bushels) were donated by St. John's to this cause, and "CROP" was considered a great local success.¹⁵

Similar to the World War II era, the poliomyelitis epidemic again fell over the community. Strict local health regulations were implemented, and the children and youth were restricted from attending Sunday School and church services. Sunday School was discontinued altogether in July. With the children at home, so were many of their parents, and general attendance suffered. By the end of August, the ban was lifted, and services returned to normal.¹⁶

In September of 1953, the children of the J. K. Smith family purchased a pastor's personal library, and donated it to the church library in honor of their father, and in memory of their mother, Bessie A. Smith. The Walther League assisted in cataloging and shelving these books, and the congregation, particularly the youth, were encouraged to read selected volumes.¹⁷

On the weekend of October 24, St. John's hosted the Annual Southeastern District's Lutheran Layman League convention. This event was complete with a beautifully decorated Parish Hall, delicious food, and excellent service. The ladies had done it again! The worship theme on Sunday was "The Lord's Call to Dedicated Men." The following week, St. John's was host to the Annual Reformation Rally, with other area congregations in attendance.¹⁸

A new Christmas fellowship night was held in 1953:

CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTMAS PARTY. Exchange Christmas gifts. Bring your gift, not to cost over .50. EACH MAN brings a gift for a man; EACH WOMAN brings a gift for a woman; same rule for young people. Place gift under tree; let Old St. Nickolas distribute. JUNIOR LEAGUERS are providing the program. COVERED DISH SUPPER. EACH FAMILY BRING AN ITEM OF FOOD. SUPPER TO BE SERVED CAFETERIA STYLE. For Tue. PM.¹⁹

As the congregation entered the year 1954, a long-awaited announcement was made:

Thanks and praise be to the Almighty God, our loving Heavenly Father, who has blessed all of us so abundantly in so many ways, especially also in enabling us to clear up the indebtedness in our church building program before the dawn of the new year into which we have entered. How we have looked forward to this news. And surely it calls for a special service of Thanksgiving to God for his grace and blessing.

SPECIAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE

SUNDAY MORNING, January 10th, 11 A. M.. Let us plan & be present to join in this service of Thanksgiving to our Lord who continues to bless St. John's so much.²⁰

The theme for this special service was "A Christian congregation remembers and gives all praise and glory to God."²¹ The members of St. John's, with the gifts of friends and neighbors, had built two churches and a parsonage -- and had paid for them in full -- in about six years. What a tremendous sacrifice of time, talent, and financial resources these people made!

The following week, St. John's continued its role of "host," as a pastors' conference was held, with Berman Smith as delegate. And again in April, the 15th Anniversary of the Southeastern District was celebrated. The Wednesday night service was conducted by an impressive list of pastors: Sermon: Rev. John W. Behnken, D. D., President of the Missouri Synod; Assisted by Rev. Rudolph S. Ressmeyer, President of Southeastern District; Rev. O. Adalbert Sauer, 1st Vice-President; Rev. Frederick A. Freed, 2nd Vice-President; and Rev. James L. Summers. Berman E. Smith and A. Carl Yount were delegates to the sessions that followed. Hosting this meeting required much preparation. The Ladies Aid and Walther League were responsible for the meals. Other committees were

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Church Minute Book II*, p. 254.

¹⁷ *Summers*.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

formed to take care of ushering, parking, and a variety of other details. The choirs also contributed their talents to the services. "The Gentlemen of the convention and many friends were liberal in their praise of all who contributed to their comfort and their necessities at this convention." On May 9, it was the ladies turn, as the Lutheran Women's Missionary League hosted a Zone Meeting. The people were proud of their new church and displayed it at every opportunity.²²

The youth of the church were also a visible force outside the local area, as Marilyn Rockett was elected Southeastern District President of the Walther League, and Bethie Jean Smith, Corresponding Secretary. The adults also received great honors, as during 1954, Berman E. Smith was appointed to the advisory council of Valparaiso University.²³

Pastor Summers was requested to supply St. Peter's congregation while they were attempting to obtain the services of a new pastor. The congregation approved, and Summers filled a dual role for about six months, during which St. John's was occasionally supplied by a variety of pastors and seminary students. St. Peter's extended a kind letter of appreciation to Summers and the congregation.²⁴

On Tuesday, August 24, 1954, less than two weeks before the Anniversary gala, the congregation and the Smith family were saddened at the death of Reverend Professor Carroll Orrestes Smith, the regular pastor who was never a regular pastor at St. John's. Funeral services were conducted by Pastor Richard F. Lineberger at Concordia on Thursday, and his graveside rites were at St. John's cemetery. The pall bearers were his nephews, Henry, Berman, Jacob, Merritt and Darvin Smith, Walter Dellinger, and Allen Arndt. The honorary pall bearers were Pastors von Sprecklesen, Runge, Ferhking, Goltermann, Fastenau, Ruprecht, Schardt, Sieving, Lehmann, Wunderlich, Koerber, Harmon, Scheuessler, Summers, Hunsucker, and Roock. The congregation donated \$50.00 to the Building Fund at Concordia in his memory. The Anniversary messages were just not the same in 1954, nor for many years thereafter.²⁵

On November 20, a new organization was formed at St. John's. While the Walther League provided the arena for Christian fellowship for the teen-agers and the Ladies Aid and Lutheran Layman's League were composed of the older members, a large number of younger married members desired their own group -- "the Couples Club until a permanent name is selected." The name "Couples Club" became the permanent name, and this group regularly engaged in a wide variety of meetings, socials, trips, and special projects.²⁶

In January of 1955, Pastor Summers resigned as circuit "Visitor," and was promptly appointed to the District Parish Education Board and the Board for Immanuel Lutheran College.²⁷ Although his responsibilities shifted, his new positions did not require such extensive travel, and resultant absence from St. John's.

The Easter service of 1955 boasted an attendance of 320, with 185 partaking of the Lord's Supper. This was the largest communion attendance of which Pastor Summers was aware. That week, Vance Hollar attended the Southeastern District Convention in Washington, D. C., where he served as a member of the Missionary Committee. Later, Tom Johnson represented the men of the church at the National Lutheran Layman's League Convention in Seattle, Washington.²⁸

Fiscal improvements at the church during 1955, under the expert supervision of Vance Hollar, included the installation of an electric water heater, wiring of hearing aids in the pews, painting, and repair on the church tower.²⁹

As the congregation celebrated its Fourth Anniversary, it was announced that favorite son Johnny Smith and favorite son-in-law-to-be Jimmy Wesson were destined for the seminary. Both young men eventually became Lutheran Pastors, and were the first from St. John's since C. O. Smith. Fred Rockett, although also home-grown, was a member of Concordia congregation when he entered the Seminary. St. John's presented these two young men with Bibles, which were accepted graciously. "The memory of these Bibles and the occasion when they were

²² *Church Minute Book II*, p. 259. Summers.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Church Minute Book II*, p. 261. RCC: Mark also listed unnamed "Newspaper obituaries" as a source. Anne McAllister located Rev. Smith's obituary in the *Catawba News-Enterprise*, 25 Aug. 1954.

²⁶ Summers.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Church Minute Book II*, p. 262-263.

presented to us will linger in our hearts until our last days here on this earth. Again . . . thank you. Sincerely in Christ."³⁰

At the October Voters' Meeting, a committee was appointed to study the feasibility of building a new Parish Hall. Other business included a rising vote of thanks to D. F., Garland, and Guy Smith for the donation of land for the cemetery. Vance Hollar and Cecil Baker were also commended for their work in sorting out the deeds to the St. John's property -- a thankless task at that time.³¹

On November 6, Pastor Summers presented a sermon theme of "When the King Returns," based on a parable from Luke 19, ". . . because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately. . . ." On the following Friday morning, November 11, 1955, at about 10:30, Pastor Summers was busily working on the Sunday bulletin. When he was about half complete, the kingdom of God visited the St. John's parsonage, as the fifty-seven year old pastor suffered a heart attack. He was rushed to Catawba Hospital in Newton, where he was called to his heavenly reward at 12:30, becoming only the third pastor to die while in service to St. John's. His personal Bible, still laying on his desk, was opened to 2 Corinthians 6.³²

For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. 2 Corinthians 6:2.

A saddened congregation attended the Sunday services conducted by Rev. Edgar Rakow. The Stewardship Sunday sermon that Summers had prepared was based on the theme, "Our Annual Pledge." The last partial bulletin was completed by another, and it contained the following verse:

In God, my faithful God
I trust when dark my road;
Tho' many woes o'ertake me,
Yet He will not forsake me.
His love it is doth send them
And, when 'tis best, will end them.³³

Pastor Summers' body was taken from Drum's Funeral Home to the parsonage that afternoon, and many sympathetic friends extended condolences to the family. They were also trying to comfort each other over the loss of their beloved Pastor. The funeral was conducted on Monday afternoon by President of the Missouri Synod, Dr. Edwin E. Pieplow, in the presence of a large audience. The family requested no flowers, but instead, donations to the missionary fund of the Southeastern District, with Tom Johnson being Chairman of the fund.³⁴

It is difficult to imagine that a pastor with only six short years of service to St. John's would be remembered as one of the most important in its history. When Summers arrived in October 1949, he found a struggling and uneasy congregation floundering in the midst of two building projects. Through his relentless encouragement and ability to instill an unprecedented motivation, the congregation became unified in "doing the work of the Lord" after the tragic fire. Congregational activities, festivals, socials, and special events grew and were nurtured. During his brief career at St. John's, Summers baptized 63 infants, married 21 couples, and conducted the funerals of 16 members. Some believed that Pastor Summers, who had a few health problems prior to his arrival back in Catawba County, may have shortened his life due to the unexpected circumstances and his over-activity. He was lovingly remembered many years later by Ila Smith as

"THE RIGHT MAN AT THE RIGHT TIME."³⁵

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Revelation 2:10

³⁰ Summers.

³¹ *Church Minute Book II*, pp. 267-268.

³² Summers.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Anne McAllister located Rev. Summers's obituary in the *Observer and News-Enterprise*, 11 Nov and 14 Nov, 1955

³⁵ Not footnoted by Mark. RCC.

Chapter 18

CONTINUING THE PROSPERITY

I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. Psalm 34:1

The Rev. Paul H. Reuter¹, previously serving Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Baltimore, MD., was installed as Pastor of St. John's on April 22, 1956. His last service was on April 30, 1962. At that time Pastor Reuter accepted a call to Martin Luther Lutheran Church, Savannah, GA.

During the course of Rev. Reuter's tenure at St. John's, the discussion of a gymnasium was started almost immediately on June 10, 1956. Vance Hollar was to serve as chairman of the committee. By April 15, 1957 the congregation passed the resolution to build the gym, 40 x 100 feet, having two stories. The dedication of the gym was on February 1, 1959. Rev. Racoe was the speaker.

With the development of St. John's congregation there was a need to consider the revamping of the constitution. A committee was formed of Tom Johnson, Wayne Smith, and Darwin Smith on October 14, 1956.

During that same meeting it was proposed that the Sunday School Superintendent be made a part of the church council. The Sunday School program could be presented more effectively on a regular basis.

All the rage was the program called P. T. R. (Preaching, Teaching, Reaching) in the Missouri Synod in the fifties. Pastor Reuter, being a dynamic preacher, was asked to serve at a P.T.R. in Tampa Bay, FL., in November of 1957. This program was popular even into the early sixties.

The growth of the congregation brought along the need for secretarial help for the pastor. It was voted that a secretary be hired for the maximum amount of \$4 per week. The first person to have this paying job was Norma Sigmon.

In order to reach out into the congregation as well as the community, two services were begun in the spring of 1958. The two services for the summer were offered at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

To further inform the community of the services at St. John's a bulletin board was erected in front of the church by Glenn Smith. This proposal was accomplished in July of 1958.

Shortly after the gym had been dedicated the voters decided to help the youth program as well as the congregational members by adding bowling alleys in the basement.

The laity of St. John's had been active in the running of the congregation. The first lay person to assist the pastor with communion was Berman Smith. It was suggested that another Elder could help with the distribution if Berman was unable. This practice has continued until the present time.

The Board of Education offered a program to the congregation called Saturday School. This educational thrust was to help the children learn more about the doctrine as well as the history of the church. This program did not officially start until after Pastor Reuter left for Savannah, GA.

The cemetery of St. John's has been a part of the congregational life and budget for centuries. A member of St. John's has the privilege of being buried in the church cemetery for free unless an arrangement is made for a special place in the cemetery. The cemetery costs for outsiders skyrocketed in 1962 when the price for a cemetery plot went from \$10 to \$25.

A Sanctuary Lamp was placed in the chancel of the church in memory of Madge Rockett. Madge had been very active in the congregation and has been long remembered for her contribution to the Ladies Aid organization. This lamp has been in use since January of 1962.

At a special called meeting on February 3, 1962, Pastor Reuter stood before the assembly and shared these words: "The mission program is excellent, the living facilities were meeting the pastor's approval, and the salary was to be made equal to the present. With these three points in mind, I am

¹. RCC: This chapter was written by Pastor Reuter and was sent without footnotes.

inclined to accept the call extended to me." A motion was made to grant Pastor Reuter a peaceful dismissal.

With that meeting, St. John's Lutheran Church closed another chapter on its history.

Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Psalm 118:25



Vacation Bible School 1959

Chapter 19

MORE THAN A QUARTER OF A CENTURY OF PROSPERITY

The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. Psalm 126:3

God moves men in His kingdom as He sees fit to do so. One man leaves with the Lord's guidance, and another man comes the same way. On February 25, 1962, Rev. Kenneth Reidenbach, Rev. Robert Landeck, Rev. Fred Vanderlage, and Rev. Carl Schuette were placed before the congregation as candidates for the office of pastor. Rev. Reidenbach received the largest number of votes on the first ballot and was extended the call. The fact that Rev. Reidenbach was not going to accept the call to St. John's is not recorded in the minutes of the congregation. However, a telephone conversation with president Willard Workman convinced Rev. Reidenbach that God wanted him to serve St. John's as pastor. On May 13, 1962, Rev. Reidenbach was installed as the new pastor and served the congregation for thirty two and one half years before retiring from the active ministry.¹ He brought ministerial leadership to the congregation in a number of areas.

The idea of a kindergarten was one of them. It did not become a reality until the fall of 1963. The teacher was Miss Enid Mason, followed by Mrs. Schumate. The program lasted until May of 1970.²

After years of study on the congregational constitution, the voters accepted the document on December 5, 1965. A major change did not take place until women of the congregation were given the right to vote and hold office. This action was taken on January 11, 1981.³

St. John's congregation had been considering the possibility of incorporating since the summer of 1962, thus protecting the members from a libel suit. On June 9, 1968, St. John's Lutheran Church became incorporated.⁴

The Acolyte Corps was functioning well in the early sixties and improved its function with an annual retreat led by the pastor in 1966. This was an all-male group until June of 1981 when boys and girls from the confirmation class formed the Acolyte Corps of St. John's.⁵

An idea of providing easy access to bathrooms for the older members of the congregation was finally developed into a new addition to the parish hall. A 30' x 55' two-story addition was built for \$99,711 in 1981.⁶

After forty years of using the same hymnal, St. John's voted to purchase new hymnals from Concordia Publishing House. This hymnal was the product of the joint effort of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. After some controversy, The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod produced another hymnal on its own and is now being used to this day.⁷

There was a growing need to inform the members of St. John's about the membership. The first church directory was pursued and finished in 1982. Since that early beginning, more directories have been developed.⁸

A library for the congregation evolved in 1982 and has been in existence since that time. Books and magazines have been made available to the children and adults of the congregation. Mrs. A. C. Yount was the first librarian.⁹

A real break from tradition came when the congregation went from the common cup to the individual cup at communion. The congregation has embraced the individual cup idea since 1983, but has on occasion used the common cup in special worship services.¹⁰

In 1986, the congregation moved from the parsonage concept to the pastor owning his own home. The sale of the former parsonage gave the congregation \$78,500 to invest in the church Extension Fund of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.¹¹

A Congregational Director was added to the staff in the person of Ron Irsch. Ron worked with the pastor in areas of visitation and preaching. The position of the Congregational Director was discontinued when Ron Irsch left St. John's to become a principal of a Lutheran school in Florida.¹²

The Boy Scout program began in 1989 and has grown in numbers over the years. In 1992, the Cub Scout program was added to supplement the Scouting program.¹³

On December 31, 1994, Pastor Reidenback preached his last sermon at St. John's. This ended more than a quarter of a century of ministry at St. John's.¹⁴

1. Church Minute Book II, p. 2. RCC: This chapter was done by Rev. Reidenback and sent to me. The footnotes were listed as endnotes.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 88, 118, 132.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 185, 190, 351.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 207, 304.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 400.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 108, 208.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 417.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 182.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 428.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 417.

For the Kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 1:14

Chapter 20

A YEAR OF TRANSITION

It is He who gave some to be pastors. Ephesians 4:11

1995 was a time of changes at St. John's¹. The pastor of thirty-two years, Kenneth Reidenbach, had retired at the end of 1994 and Irene Campbell, who had served as organist for over forty years, was also retiring. Pastor C. David Moser of Conover was hired as interim pastor, and Carolyn Miller of Zion Lutheran Church became St. John's organist in January 1995. Pastor Moser received a call to St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Taylorsville, NC also in January, which he declined.

At the January 15th Voter's meeting a Call Committee was chosen consisting of Jerome Ingle, Linda Elliott, Tonya Self, Linda Travis, Gilda Huffman, Jerry Yount, Bill Fry, and Guy Hollar. The Southeastern District's Mission and Ministry Facilitator Pastor Tim Fangmeier, Circuit Counselor Pastor James Banach, along with the Call Committee developed a plan that would take eleven months to complete with the installation of Pastor Scott Johnson on December 3, 1995. The plan involved a visit to every member's home by a volunteer group of almost forty people. During these visits each member was asked to complete a detailed survey which would assist the congregation in their selection of a pastor. Four hundred and seventy-five surveys were delivered and two hundred and sixty were returned with Betty Bostian and Phyllis Yount compiling the results.

Nominations for pastor were received from members of St. John's and forwarded to the Southeastern District in May 1995. The revised list of twelve pastors along with the information the District supplied was returned to St. John's in July.

On August 6, 1995 there was a special Voter's Meeting to consider a list of proposals for the Call Committee. The proposals included: (1) A condensed list of six pastors the Committee felt might best serve St. John's. (2) A date of September 10, 1995 for the call service. (3) The voting procedure that would be used at the call service. All proposals were approved by the voters.

The list of six pastors that were to be interviewed did not include Pastor Scott Johnson of Fairgrove, Michigan. His name was added to the interview list when two of the original six withdrew their names after their interviews. A turn of events that can only be described as the workings of the Holy Spirit, resulted after the interview with Pastor Johnson. His receiving the call, September 10, 1995 after not being on the condensed list of those to be interviewed truly showed how the Lord works in the call process. The following letter accompanied the call document: (See attached document).

Pastor Johnson and his wife Denise, came to visit St. John's on October 12 and 13, 1995 and on October 25 he accepted the call.

An appreciation luncheon for his service as Interim Pastor was held for Pastor C. David Moser on November 26.

The installation service for Pastor Johnson was held on December 3 with Pastor Olvendorf of Salem Lutheran in Taylorsville delivering the sermon. Pastor Johnson's first service was on December 10, 1995.

Pastor Johnson, his wife Denise, daughters Suzanne, 8 and Joanna, 2, along with son David 6, resided in the Chloe Sigmon house in Claremont until buying a home in Newton, NC, in 1996.

St. John's had once again gone through a time of transition and had grown in the process. During 1995 the Elders began a system of visitations to assist the Pastor through the interim which would continue. Building and renovation projects in the gym continued on schedule. Contributions and church attendance remained steady.

St. John's had been blessed with fine Christian pastors in the past, and now

1. This chapter was sent to me by Wayne M. Smith. I do not know who wrote it and it did not have footnotes.

was once again.
[on letter head]

September 12, 1995

Dear Pastor Johnson.

During its 197 year history, St. John's has been blessed with pastors who through the leading of the Holy Spirit, have preached and taught us God's Word and have faithfully administered the Sacraments for spiritual strengthening. We pray for a pastor who will continue to serve the Lord in this manner.

We have used a variety of settings for worship and our nine Elders have discussed the possibility of a contemporary service in addition to our regular 10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship. The Lutheran Worship Hymnal has been in use at St. John's for approximately twenty years and we also use printed music not found in our hymnal. We pray for a pastor who enjoys variety in worship and who will continue to lead in its planning and preparation.

Sunday School begins at 9:15 a.m. and currently has fifteen classes including three adults. We have had as many as five small group Bible Studies, but only three currently meeting. This is one of the programs we would like to encourage and expand. We pray for a pastor who supports Christian Education at all age levels and will be an active participant in our Education Program.

A congregation of 575 members calls for varied counseling needs which can be time consuming and sometimes may need to be referred to other counselors. A Stephen Ministers Program has been active in the past and we would encourage renewal of this program. We pray for a pastor who is willing and able to counsel others in a loving manner.

Our rapidly growing community has ample opportunities for outreach. While we are not strong in this area, many members feel the need to carry out the Great Commission. This is another area that needs the support and guidance of a mission-minded pastor. We pray for a pastor who is warm, friendly, and loving in his interaction with people.

Our two youth groups are the Joy Group, fourth to eight grade, and the Lutheran Youth Fellowship (LYF) for high school age. Both of these groups have been blessed with strong leadership and we pray for a pastor who recognizes the need to equip our Youth for challenges in today's world.

The Voter's Assembly meets quarterly and a fifteen member Church Council meets monthly. The Council includes the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial secretary, three of six Deacons (Trustees), two of nine Elders, and the Chairpersons of the Board of Christian Education, Stewardship, Missions, planning, and Youth. The pastor normally attends the Council and Elder's meetings. Other organizations are the LLL, LWML, AAL, Couples Club, Golden Nuggets (Senior Citizens), Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts. We pray for a pastor who will support the ministry of these organizations.

In summary, we pray for a pastor who is filled with the Holy Spirit to teach us, lead us, and stimulate us to grow in Christ so that we might bring others to know the Savior.

In His will and to His glory, these are our prayers.

Yours in Christ
St. John's Call Committee
Guy Hollar, Chairman

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit. . . Matthew 28:17

Chapter 21

A NEW BEGINNING

Preach the Good News to all Creation. Mark 16:15

With a new pastor now in place, the members of St. John's turned their attention to the tasks of God's Church, helping people grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ, and introducing Christ to all those who know Him not¹. A congregation getting used to a new pastor and a pastor getting used to a new congregation is not always an easy process. The Holy Spirit truly used the arrival of a new pastor to inspire and motivate St. John's to do even more for God's Kingdom. Both 1996 and 1997 proved to be exciting years of growth at St. John's.

During these two years, St. John's did much to enable the members of the congregation to grow in Christ.

Two new youth groups were started in January, 1996; Toddlers for Christ (for those 0 to 4 years), and the Sonbeams (for those aged 4 to 8 years). A new Sunday morning Bible study class was started in the summer of 1997 for young adults from the ages of 18 to 30. Further, a Story Time program was also begun in September of 1996 to minister to the needs of pre-school aged children. Denise Johnson volunteered to serve as Director. With these new additions St. John's now had youth ministry programs for young people from the age of zero to thirty.

New adult Bible study classes were also begun. Pastor Johnson began to lead one of the Sunday morning Bible study classes. Plus the "Defenders of the Faith" Bible study class was added on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m. beginning January 25, 1996. (This class was an in-depth study of Luther's Small Catechism.) Also two marital enrichment classes were offered in September, 1996, and January, 1997, and a parenting enrichment class was offered in October, 1997. More and more, the people of St. John's were coming together to apply God's Word to their lives.

Further, new opportunities for worship were begun. Midweek Advent services on Thursday evenings were offered for the first time in December, 1996. Also during the summer months of 1996 and 1997 mini-communion services were offered on Thursday evenings.

St. John's had also begun searching for new ways to reach out to the lost and unchurched people in the Conover area. In both 1996 and 1997, the number one adopted goal of the congregation was to actively reach out to the unchurched people in the area. To this end, the congregation started holding "Friendship Sundays" again in April of 1996 and 1997. (All members of St. John's were encouraged to invite their unchurched friends and relatives to come to a special service where they would hear about our best friend of all, Jesus!) A Brownie Troop was started by the congregation in August of 1996 to help reach out to the young people of Conover and bring them and their families into our church. New road signs for the church were installed on Rock Barn Road and Highway 16 to make it easier for newcomers to find the church. A "Trunk or Treat" program was also begun on Halloween, 1997, to help reach out into the community. A "Passing of the Peace" was started again at the end of each worship service to make it easier for members of St. John's to greet and welcome visitors. Periodic Adult Confirmation classes were offered to share the basics of the Christian faith and the good news of the love and forgiveness that Jesus offers to all. More and more a spirit of outreach also began to fill the hearts of the members of St. John's.

And the Holy Spirit blesses these efforts and used them to touch hearts and change lives. St. John's did begin to grow. New Member Sundays were held several times each year. Pew space in the Sunday morning worship service began to be a valuable commodity. Parking shortages also began to occur. Everyone began to see how powerful the Holy Spirit could be!

¹. This chapter was written by Rev. Stephen Johnson and was sent without footnotes.

Improvements to the congregation's facilities were also made during these years. A new Youth Room was constructed in the basement of the gymnasium and was dedicated in 1997. In the fall of 1997, the parking lot across the road was expanded and 74 new parking spaces were added. Also in the fall of 1997, construction of a 400-seat amphitheater behind the church was begun with the hope that it would be finished by the spring of 1998. Acoustic tiles were also ordered in 1997 to improve the sound acoustics in the gymnasium and it is hoped they will be installed in early 1998. Mark Smith memorial funds were used to purchase the new choir chimes for the congregation. These were exciting days for St. John's.

As St. John's begins its third century of serving Christ, a spirit of growth continues to dominate. Discussion is already being held about adding a new full time staff member to help Pastor Johnson in the area of youth ministry. People are beginning to talk about the need to expand our main building and add new offices, Sunday School rooms, and nursery and StoryTime space. It is hoped that a new sign in front of our building will soon be constructed that will enable us to better advertise the services and programs of the congregation. Much has been done, but much more must be done!

A contest was held to come up with a slogan for the 200th anniversary of St. John's in the fall of 1997. Many wonderful slogans were suggested, but after much consideration, the slogan suggested by Suzanne Johnson was adopted: "Lifting High the Cross for 200 years." It is our prayer that St. John's will be able to continue to life high the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ until He returns. We do not want to just exist up on the hill, but to actively hold of the cross of Christ to draw many, many people to Him! May God continue to be glorified!

... I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Revelation 21:6



North Carolina Historical Marker for St. John's Church

CONCLUSION

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Romans 3: 28

The title of this section is somewhat erroneous. It may signify the end of a book, but certainly is only a stopping point in the history of a Church destined for the future.

During the course of research, when one St. John's member was told about some of the staggering statistics of the early congregations, she asked, "Why is St. John's not any bigger than it is today?" This proved to be a very difficult question to answer, and has caused this author many hours of reflection.

In the early years, St. John's was prominently located near the intersection of the two major roads in today's northern Catawba County, and in the midst of a nearly entirely German-speaking population. Until about 1825, it had the largest church building, was the only church north of Old St. Paul's, and held a monopoly on the worship space of Germans and Lutherans in the area. When St. Peter's, St. Stephen's/Miller's, and Piney Grove/Bethel congregations were organized, people in those communities elected to attend a church closer to home, rather than ride or walk the many miles to St. John's. St. John's then was parent to many Lutheran churches. The membership of St. John's only represents a fraction then of its influence on Lutherans in Catawba County.

The word "sectarianism" cruelly describes the events of the mid-1800's, where the congregation went its separate ways. The term "anti-unionism" describes the rupture in the 1880's, which resulted in further division. "Outside interference" or "victim of circumstance" might be an appropriate term for the events of the 1890's.

By 1870, St. John's was no longer located near the main transportation routes, as the railroad provided ready access to distant lands. The population began its migration towards the villages along its path, and Conover, Claremont, and Hickory were formed, and soon had enough concentration of people to support their own churches. By the beginning of the twentieth century, St. John's became a "country" church, and watched as the town churches grew in size with amazing rapidity. The commercial centers attracted people of all beliefs, and the once Lutheran/Reformed stronghold became diluted by other denominations who built their own churches. In 1900, the sum and total of all non-Lutheran or non-Reformed churches north of the railroad track in Catawba County could be counted on one hand. Can anyone name five?

Urbanization continued for nearly a century, and resulted in gradual sprawl in territory and concentrations of Christians. Interstate 40 was begun in the 1950's and completed in the 1970's, bringing prospective members closer to St. John's, but somewhat stifling the residential growth of Conover in a northward direction. By the 1990's, the City of Conover followed the commercial and residential development across this obstacle of transportation and began offering municipal services and their benefits to the St. John's community.

In the bicentennial year, St. John's finds itself once again on "Main Street," with the possibility of hitting a golf ball from the cemetery and it landing on a true golf course fairway. The opportunities are available, the population is increasing weekly, and the traditional beliefs have changed very little.

As the old Henry Pope property still towers over its surroundings after two hundred years, and will continue to do so, St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church is one whose promising future is before them. All other churches in the neighborhood will forever look up to St. John's Church.

But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. 1 Peter 4: 7

St. John's Pastors

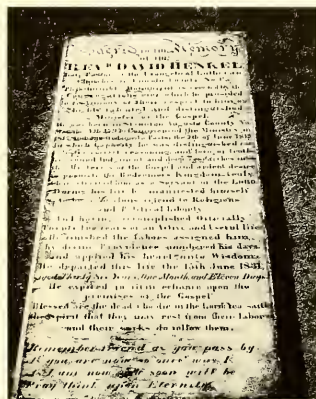
The following pictures were furnished with permission by the Concordia Historical Institute, 801 DeMun Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri: Rev. Paul Henkel and Rev. John M. Smith. Mr. Derick Hartshorn of Conover furnished the following snapshots: Tombstone of Rev. David Henkel, Tombstone of Rev. Daniel Moser, Tombstone of Rev. P. C. Henkel. The picture of Rev. David Henkel was taken from *Life Sketches of Lutheran Ministers* (1966), page 88. All other pictures in this section were furnished by St. John's Lutheran Church.



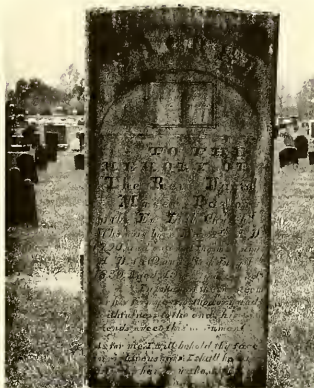
Rev. Paul Henkel



Rev. David Henkel



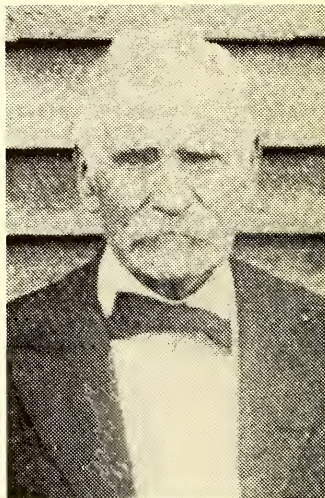
Tombstone of Rev. David Henkel
located at St. John's Cemetery



Tombstone of Rev. Daniel Moser
located at St. John's Cemetery



Tombstone of Rev. P. C. Henkel
located in St. Peter's Lutheran Church Cemetery



Rev. John M. Smith



Rev. W. H. T. Dau



Rev. Paul S. F. Bischoff



Rev. George E. Mennen



Rev. Charles F. Fredericks



Rev. O. W. H. Lindemeyer



Rev. Fred W. Rockett



Rev. C. O. Smith
(Supply Pastor)



Rev. Roland E. Haase



Rev. James L. Summers



Rev. Paul H. Reuter



Rev. Kenneth Reidenbach



Rev. Scott Johnson

Bibliography

by

Robert C. Carpenter, Editor

I located a rough draft bibliography which Mark Smith had prepared as he wrote his monumental history of St. John's Lutheran Church. Unfortunately it was incomplete and inconsistently prepared. A review of the documentation of this book reveals that very few histories are so comprehensively referenced. Mark did an outstanding job noting his sources in the footnotes. In addition Mark consulted numerous sources and located obscure sources -- manuscript, book, and pamphlet. His dedication to locating the true story of St. John's is truly remarkable.

Mark wrote his chapters independently of each other. In so doing he had no consistent footnote pattern. His footnote style differed between chapters and sometimes within each chapter. Therefore, some footnotes may differ from accepted bibliographical style. Mark initially underlined and bold-typed each book title and each manuscript letter. I took the liberty of changing book titles to italics and removed bold and underlining. This change was suggested by our publisher and allows for more bibliographical consistency. So one of my major goals was to create a consistent footnote pattern which had a credible historiographical style. Part of this goal has been achieved. Yet, I am certain that some inconsistencies may remain and some notations may not adhere to accepted style. For these omissions I apologize.

My second goal was to create a credible Bibliography. Without a complete list of sources which Mark consulted and working under time restraints, the Bibliography is limited in scope. I will make occasional remarks concerning the sources and materials Mark used in documenting this book. I used Mark's partial Bibliography and made additions as I looked at every footnote in the book. Yet, I suspect that there will still be omissions for which I apologize.

Manuscript Collections:

The ability of Mark Smith to locate obscure manuscripts is one of his greatest research strengths. We have all been the fortunate beneficiaries for his locating extensive contemporary letters, ledgers, and notations. Many of these manuscripts were in German. Mark and I, with the help of a German translating computer program, translated as many of these letters and documents as possible and included their rich wealth of information. Prior to our research many of these materials have not been footnoted or documented in the public domain. Mark's desire to go to primary source documents re-enforces the accuracy of this history. The known manuscript collections consulted by Mark Smith with my brief comments include:

Rev. J. E. Barb Collection, courtesy of Mrs. Helen Barb Bolick, given to Mark Smith, donated by Mark Smith to Southern Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbia, SC.

Chapel Hill, NC. University of North Carolina. Southern Historical Collection. David Hinkle Papers.

Charlottesville, Va. University of Virginia. Special Collections Department. Alderman Library. Henkel Family Papers, Additional Henkel Family Papers. This immense collection of Henkel letters and papers helped document much of this book. This source has not been footnoted in the public domain prior to Mark Smith's work. In addition this library also holds numerous pamphlets and rare books.

Columbia, SC. Southern Lutheran Theological Seminary. Lineberger Library. Mark used various documents, pamphlets, Synod Minutes, and letters.

Columbia, SC. University of South Carolina. The South Caroliniana Library. Lowrance-Lyles Papers.

Durham, NC. Duke University, Perkins Library. Special Collections: David Henkel Papers, C. L. Coon Papers, Stirewalt Papers, Henkel Family Papers. These manuscripts document the early Henkel influence and the Concordia College issue. In addition Duke University has many pamphlets and rare books printed by Henkel Press.

Gettysburg, Pa. Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary. A. R. Wentz Library. David Henkel Papers.

Lincolnton, NC. Lincoln County Register of Deeds.

J. C. Moser Journal #1. Mark did not list where he located this source.

Newton, NC. Catawba County Register of Deeds.

Paul Bischoff Journal, 1899-1906. Original held by the family of Rev. C. O. Smith.

Raleigh, NC. North Carolina Department of Archives and History. County Collections, Nehemiah Bonham Diary, NC Supreme Court Case #1531.

Salisbury, NC. North Carolina Lutheran Synod House. RG: NCS, Johann Gottfried Arends Diary. In addition North Carolina and Tennessee Synod Minutes are located here in book and some in manuscript form. Numerous other books and articles are also here.

Salisbury, NC. Catawba College. Minutes, Classis of North Carolina.

Walter P. Hunsucker Journal. Mark did not list where he located this source.

Winchester, Va. The Handley Library. Henkel Papers.

Winston-Salem, NC. Old Salem Archives. Gottlieb Schober Papers.

Winston-Salem, NC. Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts. Gottlieb Schober Papers.

Other Libraries Consulted

Mark consulted many libraries as he pursued obscure and rare books, pamphlets, unpublished articles, and manuscripts. From Mark's papers I have chosen to make a list of other libraries Mark consulted to assist with your understanding of the scope of his research. I will not detail what he found in all these libraries since that is not ascertainable at this time. I will make a note of certain libraries which Mark found especially helpful.

Appalachian State University Library. Boone, NC. Appalachian Collection. Appalachian State University.

Catawba County Library. Newton, NC. Mark spent countless hours researching there and Mrs. Rhodes gave him invaluable assistance.

Carl A. Rudisill Library. Lenoir Rhyne College. Hickory, NC. Mark used this library's vast Lutheran collections to expand his background knowledge.

Catawba County Historical Association. Newton, NC.

Concordia Church Library. Concordia Lutheran Church. Conover, NC.

Davie County Library. Mocksville, NC.

Elbert Ivey Public Library. Hickory, NC.

Emory University Library. Atlanta, Georgia.

Davidson County Library. Lexington, NC.

Gaston County Public Library. Gastonia, NC.

Lincoln County Public Library. Lincolnton, NC.

The Sherrod Library. East Tennessee State University. Johnson City, Tennessee.

Sherrill, Gwen Bost Papers. Gwen Sherrill shared much research with Mark as did others. Mark mentioned her contributions in his partial bibliography.

Synod Minutes and Church Records:

Mark consulted numerous synod minutes and church records. Because of their value I separated them for a distinct bibliographical listing.

Concordia English District Minutes were located at the Trinity Seminary, Columbus, Ohio and are referenced by year separately.

Concordia Lutheran Church. Conover, NC. Various church records were used by Mark Smith.

Missouri Synod Proceedings were quoted as Proceedings. I could not determine where Mark got his records but suspect he got them from the Concordia Historical Institute. Mark often did not use official minutes or proceedings but instead described events from *The Lutheran Witness*.

North Carolina Synod Minutes were located in three places: Originals and printed minutes were found at the NC Lutheran Synod House, Salisbury, NC. Mark also used North Carolina Synod Minutes, translated, Stirewalt Family Papers, Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, NC. He also used Peschau, Rev. F. W. E. *Minutes of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina From 1803-1826, Twenty-Three Conventions, Translated From the German Protocol*. Newberry, SC: Aull & Housral, Printers, 1894.

Ohio Synod Minutes. I could not determine where Mark located these Minutes but suspect he got them from Trinity Seminary, Columbus, Ohio. They are referenced by year.

St. Johns Lutheran Church. Conover, NC. Church Book I and II. Church Minute Book I and II. Church Register I. Church Bulletins. Sunday School Ledger. Loose Papers.

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church. Catawba County. Church Book.

St. Peters Lutheran Church. Conover, NC. St. Peters Church Records, transcribed.

Sharon Church. Catawba County. Sharon Church Records, transcribed.

Tennessee Synod Minutes were located at the NC Lutheran Synod House, Salisbury, NC by printed volume. Each volume is referenced separately.

Tennessee Synod Re-Organized Minutes were located at various depositories and some were in private hands. Each volume is referenced separately.

Interviews, Conversations, and Private Letters:

Mark interviewed many persons which helped form the basis for much of the most recent chapters. He also had group conversations and received letters detailing crucial information. I did not choose to list these sources in the bibliography. I instead refer the reader to the footnotes. Most footnotes are specific enough in outlining these sources.

Unpublished Materials, Articles, and Theses:

Mark found an unbelievably significant number of unpublished papers and materials in the various libraries outlined above which profoundly impacted this research book. While I cannot in any way list all the materials Mark found and used, I will attempt to list the ones Mark listed in his partial bibliography and add what I can. I recommend that the reader should closely read footnotes for these research articles.

- Allran, Austin M., "John Godfrey Arends: A Biographical Sketch". Manuscript copy, December 20, 1975.
- Carpenter, Robert C., "Griffith Rutherford: North Carolina Frontier Military and Political Leader", master's thesis, Wake Forest University, 1974.
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Periodicals:

One of the richest sources of this book is the extensive use of periodicals. Mark especially consulted the Lutheran press during the turn of the century which created a unique contemporary picture of the college and theological controversies of the time.

From the files of Mark Smith I believe that he secured a loan for the microfilm of the three Lutheran periodicals from the Concordia Historical Institute. He then read the microfilm at the Catawba County Library. Mark made copies of many of these periodicals which I located in his files. These three Lutheran publications responded to religious controversy and detailed their beliefs and opinions. There is no way I will attempt to list all the articles Mark used from these three journals. Instead I will offer them as a bibliographical source, and the reader can refer to specific articles in the text.

Lutheran Standard was the religious journal of the Ohio Synod of which the Concordia English District was associated. It was abbreviated by *LS*.

Our Church Paper was the religious journal of the Tennessee Synod and was printed by Henkel Press in New Market, Virginia. It was abbreviated by *OCF*.

The Lutheran Witness was the religious journal of the Missouri Synod. It was abbreviated by *TLW*.

Mark also secured journals from *The Lutheran Historical Conference*. These articles were varied and gave a serious scholarly background for all Lutheran history. I will again not detail each article but will list the journals which Mark and I read during the research.

The Lutheran Historical Conference. Essays and Reports. [The first date refers to the date of the conference and the second date is the date of publication.] Vol. II 1966, 1968; Vol. III 1968, 1970; Vol. IV 1970, 1972; Vol. V 1972, 1974; Vol. VI 1974, 1977; Vol. VII 1976, 1978; Vol. VIII 1978, 1980; Vol. IX 1980, 1982; Vol. X 1982, 1984; Vol. XI 1984, 1986; Vol. XII 1986, 1988; Vol. XIII 1988, 1990; Vol. 14 1990, 1992.

Other Periodicals include:

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Catawba News Enterprise
Gastonia Gazette
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